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MUSCLE CAR

REVIEW

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- › FORD STARLINER: GRACE & POWER
- › UP WITH THE REBEL MACHINE

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WAS A PILE!**
SEE PAGE 32



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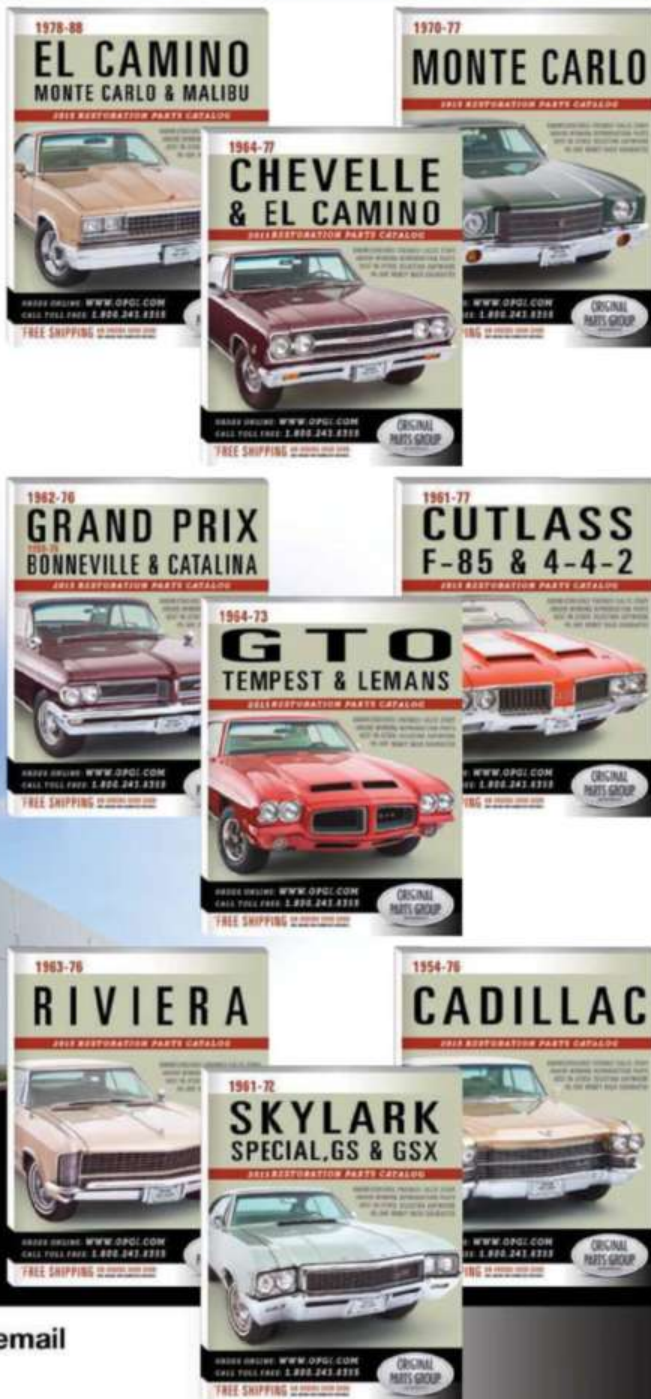
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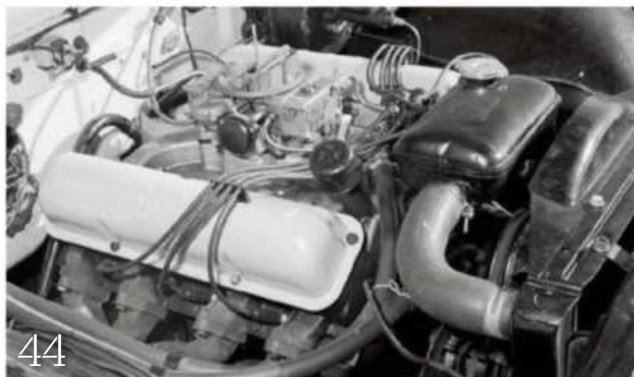
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ON THE COVER: We've been following the rebirth of the Basket Case Chevelle for about a year now, and we figured the beautiful final result would be the right candidate for our special Chevelle-themed issue. *Car Craft* Editor John McGann photographed the car in Muscle Car Restorations' spray booth, and Mark Ehlen's wrap-up of the project begins on page 32.



ELDON COREY PHOTO

■ “The things we take for granted on cars we drive every day do not apply to a movie car,” says reader Eldon Corey about his hero car from the *Starsky & Hutch* movie.

Your Favorite Movie Cars and Car Movies

The MCR mailbox is a constant source of surprise. It's hard for me to know which stories will affect you strongly enough to write me and which ones will pass with little or no comment. For example, I was surprised to get just one email about the remarkable Boss 429 that was on the cover of the July issue, while Tom Shaw's and my editorial columns from that issue about cars, movies, and TV shows generated a ton of response. It's a topic you all feel pretty passionately about. I could tell because so much of the mail contained the words, “Are you kidding?” or “I can't believe you left out . . .” and named a movie that wasn't on my favorites list. Rarely have I seen so many exclamation points in your letters. I thought I'd devote my space this month to some of the things you had to say.

Apparently I have missed some real classics.

Aw, c'mon, Drew. No mention of *Two-Lane Blacktop* with the GTO and the old souped-up Chevy? I watch that movie in its entirety at least once a year.

Dave Stoyanovich

Are you kidding? How could you forget *Hollywood Knights*? One of the best and most entertaining.

Dave Demsko

You gotta be kidding! I couldn't believe you left out *Hollywood Knights*! There is a car flick! The original Project X 1957 Chevy, an S/C Cobra, GTO, an El Camino, all within about the first 30 minutes of the movie! And Michelle Pfeiffer in her younger days! Are you kidding me?! You missed the boat! Turn in your man card now.

John Knajdl

How can you forget *Dirty Mary Crazy Larry*? Best car movie ever!

Doug Keppler

I cannot believe you left out two of the greatest car movies of all time, *Vanishing Point* and *Two-Lane Blacktop*! Both are cult classics. For what it's worth I also love *Bullitt* as a movie, not only for the chase but for Steve McQueen, a great actor, and the backdrop of San Francisco, one of the world's great cities. All make for an awesome motion picture.

Damien Scully

The coolest movie car of all time has got to be the '55 Chevrolet James Taylor drove and raced in the cult classic *Two-Lane Blacktop*! That car was an era-correct true street warrior! From a dead stop, that '55 could easily destroy all other movie cars. Period!

John Proden

No. 7 on my list is *Two-Lane Blacktop*. James Taylor and Dennis Wilson are street racers driving a wicked '55 Chevy (the same car was used in *American Graffiti*) and they get in a cross-country race with Warren Oates who's driving an Orbit Orange 1970 GTO Judge.

Keith Scott

Other films that you loved and I forgot (or haven't seen) included *Cannonball Run*, *Le Mans*, *The Seven-Ups*, and *Aloha, Bobby and Rose*.

Then there were the TV shows with cool muscle cars you loved. Reader Keith Scott listed *Nash Bridges* ('Cuda convertible), *Stingray* ('65 Corvette), *Lights Out* ('71 Chevelle SS454), and *Burn Notice* ('73 Charger with Cragars). Jim Erdbrink Jr. cast a vote for “that badass Torino of David Starsky,” which is also his 20-year-old son's favorite, after seeing the 2004 *Starsky & Hutch* movie.

Speaking of *Starsky & Hutch*, Eldon Corey wrote with a completely different perspective on movie cars. He owns the No. 1 hero car from that 2004 movie starring Ben Stiller and Owen Wilson.

Hero cars 1 and 2 were built by Movie Mike in California. With this car I have learned that the things we take for granted on cars we drive every day do not apply to a movie car, things such as working turn signals, backup lights, windshield wipers, horn, mirrors, door locks, a spare tire, and a jack. These are things a movie car doesn't need. My car even has one wheel that's different from the other three. I suspect this happened in the crash that was shown in the outtakes at the end of the movie.

I brought my car out to Vegas for the 2015 Paul Casey Las Vegas Car Stars event, and I stayed with Barry, the owner of hero car No. 2. Both cars were together for the first time since the movie's release. We compared the two cars. They were supposed to be exactly the same, but we found more differences. Apparently the parts from both cars were put in one pile while the cars were being painted, and during reassembly the parts were mixed up, like the drip moldings, rear seats, and even the trunk lids. Not that anyone would notice on the big screen.

I agree, *The Blues Brothers* is the best car movie ever.

Eldon Corey

I was especially pleased to read that last line.

Drew Hardin
mcreview@sbcglobal.net

“That '55 could easily destroy all other movie cars. Period!”

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ROAD RUNNER STORY ERROR

In Geoff Stunkard's story about the original Road Runner, the "Top Dog Road Runners" sidebar mentions the "tri-power Holley layout that had first shown up on the L68/L71 427 Corvette" ["Thick Like Honey," July 2015]. That is incorrect. The first use of the tri-power Holley setup was on the 401hp/390ci Ford of 1961 (I owned one), which carried over into 1962 on the 406 motor. *Hot Rod* magazine wrote about it in the May 1961 issue. Hope the Ford guys don't jump on you too hard.

**Robert P. Gerometta, Operations Director
Automotive History Preservation Society**

You're right. Here's a photo that Hot Rod tech editor Ray Brock shot of the induction system for his write-up of the "401 HP Ford" in the May 1961 issue. When he wrote the story, the 6V system was available only through Ford parts departments, and it added 26 hp to the 375-horse 390 V-8.

TWO CENTS

I've subscribed to *MCR* for many years and have all the back issues to 1984. I lived through the last part of the original muscle car era, becoming a car nut in 1967. Here's my two cents, in no particular order.

Please, no late-model muscle cars. The classic era is called that for a reason. Don't dilute your coverage of the '60-'71 era (or '73, counting the SD 455 Poncho).

Please, please, please, don't make a dirty, paint-peeling "barn find" one of your feature cars. Leave that for Jerry Heasley's column, where it's an interesting, welcome addition.

BREATH OF FRESH AIR

What a pleasure and a breath of fresh air was the recent story "Shotgun 429" about the '70 Boss 429 Mustang [July 2015]. What made the story unique and informative was that it was written through the eyes of the original and only owner who actually took the car drag racing.

The '69-'70 Boss 429 Mustang is probably the most maligned and misunderstood muscle car from the 1965-1973 era. Initially everyone (including the Eszszkys) thought the Boss 429 was going to be a factory 12-second street terror, and when it didn't live up to those expectations it was dubbed a low 14-second slug by many, including the magazines of the day. The Boss 429 was intentionally detuned by Ford (small carb, inefficient cam, poor exhaust



system), but it was still a mid-13-second car with the right driver, which was the Eszszkys' personal experience and my own while watching a bone-stock 1969 Boss 429 with a good driver and poor weather run a 13.7 e.t.

Thanks for an informative article about a car whose racing prowess is often the subject of unintended misinformation.

Mark Dell Acqua

How about features on fullsize muscle from the late 1960s and early '70s? I know they're hard to find, but they're out there. Cars like the '70 Plymouth Sport Fury, '69 Mercury Marauder XL100, '67 Pontiac Grand Prix, and '68-'69 Ford XL.

Keep up the AMC coverage. I know totally optioned-out, red/white/blue Javelins will always get their due, but how about a regular '67-'70 Javelin in a run-of-the-mill color?

I know there are two sides (at least) to some of my points, but please consider them. Kudos for a great mag!

David Burlington

ALL MAKES

I love the Canadian Beaumont Cheetah you published in your July 2015 issue ["Conroy's Cheetah"]. I have owned all makes in my day, from '69, '70, and '73 Road Runners to the cars seen here, a '67 Chevelle SS that I rescued from a neighbor's garage and a 1-



of-30-something '06 Legend Lime convertible Mustang GT. As I said, love the mag. And yes to at least one feature on newer muscle.

Mike Kordic



DOWN ON BUYING MUSCLE?

I wanted to share a picture of my restored '72 Cutlass 4-4-2 convertible and ask a question: I get the feeling this publication looks down on guys who buy their classic at auction instead of the blood, sweat, and beers of a home-built restoration. I am fortunate to have done both, and I should not have to feel ashamed for buying a restored classic.

Ron Gabianelli

It is never our intent to look down at any muscle car. That said, if you've read this magazine for any length of time, you know the premium I put on a good backstory for a car. I've been frustrated by owners of outstanding cars who can tell me little more than at which auction they bought the car and for how much. Owners who can passionately talk about their car—its provenance, its history, and its impact on their lives, no matter whether it was bought or built—make for far more interesting stories.

WRITE US! Email the editor at mcreview@sbcglobal.net, or send a letter to Letters, *Muscle Car Review*, 831 S. Douglas St., El Segundo, CA 90245. Letters may be edited for content and space, and we cannot return any photos sent with your letters. Please include your name, address, and phone number in case we need to reach you.



300 Cars Turn Out for Ground Up Classic



More than 300 beautifully restored, high-performance, and customized cars made their way to the Ground Up facility in Naugatuck, Connecticut, for the 11th Annual Ground Up Car Show in July. Ground Up teamed with the United Way of Naugatuck and Beacon Falls to once again close down the entire street for a day of awesome cars.

Even in these hard economic times, Ground Up received more support from vendors than any previous year in the form of raffle items, gift certificates, and other promotional items, showing that the classic



car community is still as alive as ever.

The cars on display ranged from Stude-

bakers and Jaguars to late-model Camaros. Ground Up displayed its own fleet of Camaros, Chevelles, and Novas, including the company's latest barn find, a Chevelle LS6, beautiful in red with white SS stripes, a black interior, a four-speed, buckets, and a console.

At the end of the day, Ground Up and the United Way collected more than \$4,500 for local charity. To see more photos from the day, visit Ground Up's Facebook page. And to check out all the muscle car parts the company has to offer, visit ss396.com.

Marty Schorr Honored

The Automotive History Preservation Society (AHPSOC) has awarded Martyn L. Schorr an Honorary Membership in the Society. The recognition comes from "a lifetime creating written materials that are now an important part of the historical chronicle of the performance car industry and hobby," noted the society.

During muscle's heyday, Schorr was the editor of nearly a dozen automotive magazines, including *Hi-Performance Cars*, *Custom Rodder*, and *Speed and Supercar*. He was the founding editor of *High-Performance Pontiac* and *Vette*. He worked with Joel Rosen to create the Baldwin-Motion

brand in the 1960s, and then was involved with the brand's relaunch in 2005. In 2009, Schorr chronicled the history of Baldwin-Motion in his book, *Motion Performance: Tales of a Muscle Car Builder*.

"This selection is based on Marty's demonstrated dedication to the Society's mission and an insightful concern for the preservation of our automotive heritage," said Bob Gerometta, the operations director for the AHPSOC, posing (at right) with Schorr. Schorr shared the news with us in typically Marty fashion: "Here's proof that if you hang around long enough in this field, someone recognizes you!"



KEN KAYSER PHOTO

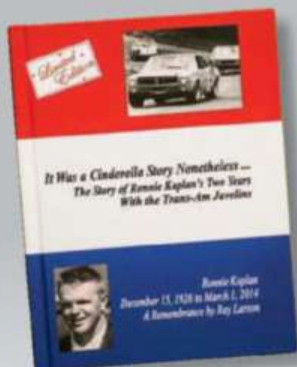
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Muscle Car Bookshelf



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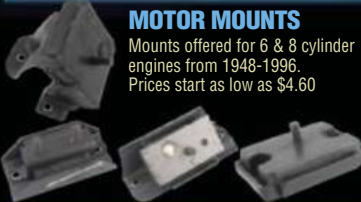
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64-65, 72 66-68 69 70-71

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LEMANS
GTO

1965
THROUGH
1973

1978
THROUGH
1993

1955
THROUGH
1957

1948
THROUGH
1996

1967
THROUGH
1981

1964
THROUGH
1987

1947
THROUGH
1998

1967
THROUGH
1981

1964
THROUGH
1972

By Jerry Heasley



■ Luckily the rear sport slats and decklid spoiler came with this rare find.

I grinned when I read the VIN, OF02G100081, followed by the words, 'Cleveland Intro Show, Cleveland Sheraton' from an issue of *Mustang Monthly* a couple years ago."

Bob Waters immediately recognized the digits "00081" as belonging to his 1970 Boss 302 Mustang, a yellow car he acquired 25 years earlier in a small town in Iowa. He says he always knew that the Boss's low VIN meant it was a very early build and probably a first-day production unit. Now, as he read Donald Farr's magazine article, he found out his Mustang had a history as part of a group of 14 Boss 302s, all painted Bright Yellow, that Ford Motor Company assembled for dealer intro shows and other promotional activities.

These 14 cars were not exactly assembly line stock. Bob read with deep interest the differences in these cars, such as chrome taillight housings and stainless rear window molding, as opposed to blacked-out pieces.

Bob couldn't wait to walk out to his storage facility to check his car for the differences listed in the article. Sure enough, he

found the brightwork in the trim. Another interesting feature was a different stripe placement on the rear quarters (stripes angling upward and into the side marker lights.)

Bob isn't sure of the exact year, but he

guesses 20-25 years ago he attended a swap meet in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. There, he ran across a Boss 302 block for sale.

"Where is the rest of the car?" he asked the young man selling the block. "Oh, it's back at home."



■ The Boss 302 engine was gone, but a couple years earlier Bob Waters purchased a correct Boss 302 short-block from the owner at a swap meet. Buying the block is how Bob found the car.

"He found out his Mustang had a history"

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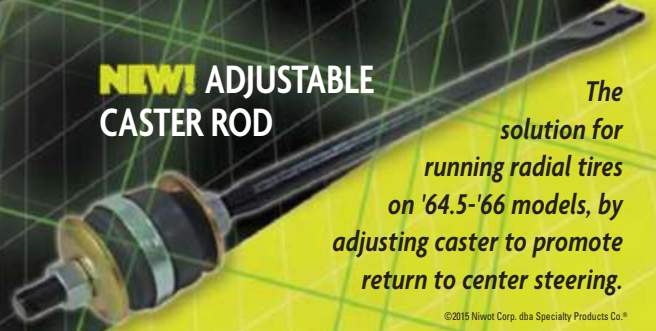


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RARE FINDS

FORD FACTORY SHOW BOSS UNCOVERED

Bob left his contact info with the young man in case the Boss 302 ever came up for sale. Two years later it did.

Under the hood was a 351 two-barrel Cleveland motor. The original Boss 302 engine was long gone. Waters had purchased a 302 Boss short-block (and "several more parts") from the young man. However, this block was a Ford replacement, appropriate for this 1970 model, but not the original block.

"All I did was pull the engine and park the car inside. I cleaned it up, but other than that, I didn't do anything with it," said Bob.

More than a quarter of a century flew

by. When Donald Farr's article came out, Bob didn't have the time and money to invest in the significant restoration this car needed, so he sold the Boss 302 to Rick Parker of Signature Auto Classics in Columbus, Ohio.

Rick said, "I got a call from Keith Coleman, just a wonderful friend in Iowa. He called and said he had a friend named Bob Waters with 'one of those early special Boss 302s with the real goofy VIN numbers.'"

Rick checked out the magazine article and discovered OF02G100081 went to Ford Motor Company's dealer introduction show in Cleveland, which took place at the Cleveland Sheraton.




■ Rick Parker will restore this Boss to its original Ford show car specifications.



■ The interior was unaltered from stock. Note original Hurst T-handle shifter and two-spoke steering wheel.

"I cleaned it up but didn't do anything with it"

This 1970 model would be a great car for Rick's shop to restore. Signature Auto Classics is more than a restoration shop. Rick is an enthusiast with a large collection of Ford muscle cars of his own. This Boss would be first a Boss to love, but with the bonus of a special Ford build with features unique to the other 13 "Show Boss" Mustangs.

Check our list below. Maybe one of our readers owns another one of these lost special Boss 302s. If so, please email me. 

Do you have a **RARE FIND** story to share? Contact Jerry Heasley at jerry@jerryheasley.com.



■ The serial number documents this car as one of the 14 Show Bosses Ford built for dealer promotions.

THE SHOW BOSSES

OF02G100043 New York Intro Show, New York Hilton Hotel

OF02G100048* Detroit Intro Show, Cobo Hall

OF02G100049 Omaha Intro Show, Omaha Civic Center

OF02G100050 Houston Intro Show, Thomas Convention Center

OF02G100055* St. Louis Intro Show, Kiel Auditorium

OF02G100056* Phoenix Intro Show, State Fair Coliseum

OF02G100057* Seattle Intro Show, Seattle Coliseum

OF02G100058 Dearborn Steel Tubing, Intro Show

OF02G100060 National Press Conference, Gurney's Inn, Long Island, NY

OF02G100062* Atlanta Intro Show, Atlanta Civic Center

OF02G100064 Richmond Intro Show, Richmond Arena

OF02G100065 Baltimore Intro Show, Baltimore Civic Center

OF02G100081* Cleveland Intro Show, Cleveland Sheraton

OF02G100082* Cincinnati Intro Show, Cincinnati Convention Center

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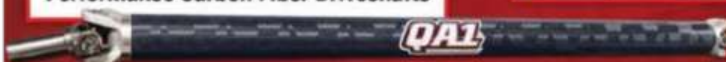
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READERS' RIDES

Brent Oliveira 1967 Chevelle



HERE ARE A FEW PICTURES

of my beloved 1967 Chevelle. It has a 454 big-block with a mild hydraulic flat-tappet cam from Edelbrock, fresh cylinder heads, a Holley 770-cfm carb, Edelbrock intake, and a full MSD ignition setup. The transmission is a Turbo 400 with a shift kit. The rearend has 3.73 gears with a limited slip.

The interior is all new but redone to look completely

stock. Same with the steering and suspension. I have replaced everything, but I used stock-style parts, no crazy aftermarket stuff.

I found this car as someone else's stalled project. He lost interest in this Chevelle and it just sat. And sat. Since this is my favorite muscle car ever, I bought it and gave it a new

loving home. It was just a body sitting on a chassis and a bunch of boxes full of parts, hardware, wiring harnesses, and so on. I built it myself in my home garage. It's not a Super Sport, so I figured I had a blank slate to do

as I wished, with the only exception being a tight budget (of course). It is not a show car, but I love taking it to car shows anyways. It also was never intended to be a daily driver, but I still drive it constantly. Even year 'round! Nothing beats firing up a big-block muscle car and cruising with the windows down.

Matt Orr 1970 Malibu

SHORTLY AFTER MY DAD

came back from Vietnam in 1969, he bought this dark green 1970 Chevelle with a 350 and a four-speed. (That's my older brother sitting in front of it; I wasn't born until 1978.) He didn't have the extra money to buy the Super Sport package. I've looked for a dark green Chevelle since I was old enough to have a job and could never find one I could afford. In the late 1980s and early 1990s the ones I saw were around \$15,000. Then, as I made more money, well, the price kept going up. Recently I found a couple of them and they were \$30,000-plus. I finally hit a wall and decided to quit looking because I was just tired of being disappointed. I decided that if I could find a 1970 Chevelle that was a pretty good car that was affordable, I would go with that.

About two weeks passed, and a buddy sent me a text of a red and black Malibu that was



about 3½ hours north of us in Little Rock, Arkansas. It sounded good and the owner didn't say anything that turned me away, so I decided to pull the trigger. While talking to the owner, he told me that it was originally a

dark green color. He bought it 14 years ago and painted it red as a present for his wife, who used to have one when she was younger. I just shook my head and laughed.

When I got to the car I found

that it was all original except for the paint color and the black interior (which was put on over the original interior). It has all of its original sheetmetal except for the aftermarket hood. The frame is also in perfect shape with no repairs. We did the deal, and before I drove off his wife reminded him to show me the items in the glovebox. Turns out he had all of the original paperwork and warranty paperwork along with the Protect-O-Plate still fixed on the warranty brochure.

I'm now the third owner of it and have never been happier with any vehicle. Everywhere I look on this car I see original parts, all the way from the brake lines to the turn signal flasher. I'll get the factory air working over the next couple of weeks and plan on taking it apart, somewhat, to hopefully find the build sheet.

I finally found my green Chevelle after all of these years—and it's red!

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RACE DAY

Monday, 9/14

**Gateway
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RACE DAY

Tuesday, 9/15

**Lucas
Oil
Raceway**

Indianapolis, IN

RACE DAY

Wednesday, 9/16

**Great
Lakes
Dragaway**

Union Grove, WI

RACE DAY

Thursday, 9/17

**Cordova
International
Raceway**

Cordova, IL

FINALS

Friday, 9/18

**Gateway
Motorsports
Park**

Madison, IL

HEADS-UP!

Saturday, 9/19

**Gateway
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LEARN MORE AND CATCH ALL THE COVERAGE AT HOTROD.COM

Charles Seawright 1970 Chevelle



I BOUGHT THIS CAR FOR MY WIFE,

Sue, for Christmas in 2003. It was a 350 two-barrel car with manual drums, power steering, and air conditioning. Originally gold, it was basically a solid driver, in primer, with a worn-out interior.


I rebuilt the engine using lots of chrome, an aluminum intake, a Holley carburetor, a solid Ultradyne cam, ceramic-coated headers, and a hot HEI distributor.

The Turbo 350 trans was freshened. A 10-inch stall converter was installed. I put a Richmond Powertrax unit in the rearend. My wife said she wanted "two-tire fire."



I installed CPP four-wheel power disc brakes and 15-inch American Racing Torq-Thrust II wheels. It has Series 40 Flowmaster mufflers, so it sounds good.

I had a friend help redo the interior in black. Another friend painted it Sue's choice of Huger Orange with black stripes.

I converted the air conditioning to R-134a, with all new components. We cruise in style and love the air-conditioned comfort when it is hot out. 



We want your readers' rides! Share the story of your muscle car. What did it look like when you got it? Have you done any restoration work? Email your stories and high-resolution digital photos to mcreview@sbcglobal.net, or mail them to *Muscle Car Review*, Readers' Rides, 831 S. Douglas St., El Segundo, CA 90245. We reserve the right to edit your stories, and photos cannot be returned.



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OCTOBER 3RD, 2015



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All vehicles model-year 1990-newer pay a modest park-fee of \$10/car, with no charges for additional passes. All show proceeds go **100% DIRECTLY** towards supporting Silver Springs.

No judges, no tech, no "leave your top and windows up!", no bro'ing on blacktop in a mall parking lot with nothing to do... October 3rd, 2015. Spend a relaxing day in a natural garden setting to visit with fellow hobbyists and friends. Whether your GM-powered car/or truck is classic or modern, stock or modified, you are welcome to join us! NPD suppliers will be on hand showcasing their wonderful products. You must enter a GM-powered vehicle to receive the show package/benefits. The show is totally free to 1989-earlier vehicles, however registration must be turned in by September 25th, 2015 or you will be subject to the \$10 fee!

This is a just for fun event! Judging is people's choice. Ballots due by 3:00pm and awards presented at 4:00pm; you must be present at award ceremony to receive your award. Please join us, cars will be allowed to leave immediately following awards presentation.

The show also incorporates an All-GM cruise to Cedar Key from NPD's main warehouse 900 S.W. 38th Ave, Ocala on Friday morning October 2nd. Participants are welcome to tour/browse NPD's extensive private car and truck collection starting at 8 A.M. before a short driver's meeting at 9:45 A.M., then the cruise departs. For more information, visit our website at www.npdlink.com/store/pages/ss_gm.html and click the "All GM Cruise" button. You can also contact Derek Putnam for more information by phone or e-mail (contact information listed below).

[npdlink.com/store/pages/ss_gm.html](http://www.npdlink.com/store/pages/ss_gm.html) and click the "All GM Cruise" button. You can also contact Derek Putnam for more information by phone or e-mail (contact information listed below).

PLEASE NOTE: If you're planning to attend the event, but will not be participating/registering, you may enter the park for \$8/vehicle (up to 8 passengers), \$5/single-occupant-vehicle, or \$2.00 walk-or-bicycle in.

For more info call: Derek Putnam 352-861-8701 (ext. 4227) or Email: dputnam@NPDlink.com.

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SHOW DATE & TIMES, OCTOBER 3RD, 2015

Day of Show Registration/Check-in: 7am-10am sharp.

NO LATE ARRIVALS

Silver Springs park hrs: 8am until sunset. **NO EARLY DEPARTURES**

No overnight RV camping in Silver Springs parking lot. Camping is available for Silver Springs State Park @ ReserveAmerica.com.

Pets are allowed in park. Except 1 bottled water per person, **NO outside drinks, food or coolers allowed in park!**

Online Registration: www.npdlink.com/store/pages/ss_gm.html

Official Oktoberfest Registration Form, Please mail all entries to:

NPD c/o Silver Springs 2015, 900 S.W. 38th Ave,
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Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Daytime Ph #: (____) _____

For Non-preregistered and show vehicles 1990-newer, you will be charged \$10 upon arrival at registration. Please bring cash, credit cards not accepted.

Vehicle Info: Year: _____ Make: _____

Model: _____ Color: _____

Signature required: _____

By signing I agree to abide by show rules & understand I am solely responsible for my vehicle & merchandise. I agree to release Silver Springs Management LLC, Florida D.E.P., Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund of the State of Florida, and all sponsors and event organizers from liability for personal injury or damage to property.

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(full-sized, B-body, etc.)

☐ F-BODY

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45 Years With a Special SS454

By Richard Truesdell

If you happen to find yourself in Anaheim, California, you might want to stop in and visit Katella High School. There, in the trophy case, is a unique piece of muscle car history. The late 1960s and into the 1970s was a time when the region, and Orange County in particular, still had dragstrips on which young speed

freaks honed their skills.

Although it might be hard to believe today, there was a time when high school championship drag races were held, sponsored by KEZY radio in Orange County, with events at the long-gone Orange County International Raceway (now the Irvine Spectrum Shopping Center).

That is where a young Dawn Henrichsen, just 17 and barely old enough to drive, dusted off more than 300 male competitors, taking home the hardware. She was a pioneer of sorts who stood up for her right to do exactly what she wanted.

But the story starts a few years earlier, 1970 to be exact, when 18-year-old Kent



DeBord walked into Fletcher Jones Chevrolet in Westminster, California, on a sweltering day in June. Accompanied by his mom and dad, the trio signed the paperwork to take delivery of a 1970 Chevelle—and not just any 1970 Chevelle, either.

Remember that 1970 was what many consider the pinnacle of the muscle car era, the year when the Big Three (and little AMC, too) served up some of the most powerful cars of that (or any) era. It was the year when 428s and 429s resided under the hoods of Fords and Mercurys. You would find 426 Hemis and 440 Six Packs under the hoods of Mopars. And even AMC offered its biggest V-8 ever, displacing 401 ci. It was, as they say, the best of times.

At GM, each division offered up its own high-powered intermediates, legendary cars such as the Buick GSX, Olds 4-4-2, and Pontiac GTO. In this honor roll of big-block muscle cars, none stood out more than the Chevelle SS454.

The Chevelle SS454 is legendary, in any form, starting with the 360hp version. But if you ticked the right option on the order sheet, the one marked LS6, you were rewarded with 450 hp (in reality, the number was closer to 500). The 454 LS6 benefited from an 800-cfm Holley four-barrel carb mounted atop an aluminum intake, with solid lifters and four-bolt mains. The advertised 450 hp was the high point of the muscle car era. Right off the showroom floor it was capable of turning mid-13s in the quarter-mile, making it the scourge of strip and street.

Carrying a window sticker of \$4,864, this Chevelle cost just about as much as a fully equipped Cadillac. Kent clearly remembers his father saying, “Son, for the price of this one car you could buy two. If you buy it, you better keep it forever.”

After Kent asked his dad to take a test drive, it became clear why the Chevelle cost just about the same as a new Sedan

de Ville. As for keeping it “forever,” his dad turned out to be something of a prophet.

This was not the first time Kent had been around the block in a GM muscle car. Previously he owned a 1965 4-4-2, which had something of a legendary reputation in the environs of South Orange County. And it is there—specifically the communities of Anaheim and Garden Grove—where this story really begins.

Like his contemporaries, young Kent had two things on his mind: cars and girls. In his case it was a particular girl, the aforementioned Dawn, whom he had met through a cousin. They started dating between the time he sold the 4-4-2 and took delivery of the SS454. As Kent tells it, Dawn was rather underwhelmed when he picked her up for a Fourth of July beach party in his mom's 1967 Caprice.

“Where’s that awesome-looking 4-4-2?” he recalls her asking. Kent says he knew immediately she was “the one.” The two, along with the Chevelle, have been forever linked.

It didn’t take Dawn long to forget the 4-4-2. Kent mentioned that the Chevelle Super Sport on the way was pretty badass, but went no further at the time. And when the special-ordered car arrived at the dealership, the first person he showed it to was Dawn, who was, well, underwhelmed. It seems that she was really partial to the 4-4-2. Kent remembers the day like it was yesterday.

“Dawn wanted to go to Del Taco for a Coke. After getting our drinks, she asked me if she could drive home. Now mind you, she was just 16 and had her driver’s license just a few months. Reluctantly I agreed, and since the car has a bench seat, I scooted over to the middle to assist her driving. As fate would have it, at a stoplight a guy in a ‘Cuda pulled up alongside us, revving his engine like he wanted to race. You know, back in those days a street race only lasted through Second gear. By then you knew which car was faster. I was feeling disappointed that I wasn’t driving because I wanted to blow the doors off this guy.

“So I said to Dawn, ‘I’m going to put my left foot on the gas pedal, and when the light turns green, hold onto the steering wheel and don’t let go.’

“As soon as the light turned green, I punched the accelerator pedal and put my foot to the floor. The car burned rubber, pinned us back into the seat, scratched rubber in Second gear, and we got a full car length ahead of the ‘Cuda before backing off, with Dawn screaming, ‘That was awesome!’ Needless to say, that’s all it took to get her hooked. I think she forgot all



**“Kent had two things
on his mind: cars and girls”**



“In this honor roll of big-block muscle, none stood out more than the Chevelle SS454”

■ For what he paid for his new LS6 Chevelle back in 1970, Kent DeBord could have had two cars. “Better keep it forever,” his father advised. And so he did. Forty-five years later the car has been repainted but is otherwise original.

about the 4-4-2.”

While they were dating, they had adopted each others’ interests, and that included drag racing. As both became more familiar with the car—Kent wrenching and Dawn driving—her timeslips improved. She was soon entering the high-school championship drags.

For the championships, her right arm was in a cast after breaking it roller skating. No matter. Kent’s LS6 is an automatic. So she eliminated car after car (and boy after boy). Most of her victims had no idea they’d been beaten by a girl until after each elimination. She made it to the semi-final round before she was eliminated, but not without a bit of controversy.

“She should have been in the final run,” says Kent. “But due to unfair last-round handicapping—of which I made a formal protest to no avail—she finished Third.”

Dawn and Kent tied the knot on February 25, 1972, and set out to raise a family.

AT A GLANCE

1970 CHEVELLE SS454

Owned by: Dawn and Kent DeBord

Restored by: Unrestored (except for repaint)

Engine: 454ci/450hp LS6 V-8

Transmission: Turbo-Hydramatic 400 3-speed automatic

Rear end: 12-bolt with 4.56 gears and Positraction

Interior: Black vinyl bench seat

Wheels: 14-inch GM SS wheels

Tires: F70-14 Goodyear Polyglas



■ Whenever Kent put speed parts on the Chevelle for racing, he carefully stowed the factory equipment for safekeeping. That’s a big part of why the born-with LS6 still looks so original.



■ SS models of the Chevelle were fitted with three round gauges in the instrument panel, rather than the rectangular speedometer in standard models. If the optional tach was ordered for an LS6, the redline was measured at 6,500 rpm.



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#BecauseRoadkill



■ Kent and Dawn DeBord during her drag racing days, when she was 17 and he was 21.



■ The happy couple today, still enjoying their Chevelle.

“The Chevelle cost just about the same as a new Sedan de Ville”



■ The Oakley headquarters building in Southern California adds a little background drama to the DeBords' Chevelle. It would have been nice to shoot the car at OCIR, its old stomping grounds during the drag racing days, but that track—unlike this Chevelle—is long gone.


But the duo continued to race almost every Wednesday and Saturday into the first half of the 1970s. And of course there was street racing. In the '70s, street racers from all over Orange County congregated at the now-closed Nabisco factory off Interstate 5 in La Mirada.

“We would race for a long time before the cops would come and shut us down,” Kent says. “The police knew us well, and when the black-and-whites showed up, rarely anyone got tickets. We raced with safety standards in place, and the cops were cool. Boy, was that a different era.”

After their retirement from the street racing scene in 1976, the duo continued to compete in special events until 1983, when Orange County International Raceway shut down.

As the 1970s turned into the '80s, then the '90s, the car dubbed the Jungle Rat (Kent had once worked at Lion Country Safari) sat in the DeBords' garage. In 1999, with their own kids grown and the nest almost empty (by that time, the DeBords were raising granddaughter Kasey), Kent decided it was time to put it back on the road. Ironically, Kent now owns a foreign-

car repair shop in Aliso Viejo, California.

As each part was replaced with after-market equipment back in 1970, Kent had had the good sense to put all the OE parts on a shelf. So, after taking the car down to bare metal and treating it to a top-tier repaint, all the original parts were reinstalled. When the work was finished, the Chevelle was back to its as-delivered condition, just like the day Kent and his parents picked it up at Fletcher Jones Chevrolet. And now it's a show car that Dawn and Kent look forward at some point to handing down to the next generation. 

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By Scotty Lachenauer

Ray Smith spent the last 25 years amassing every 1967 Chevelle part he could get his big paws on. Unfortunately for him, his basket case SS hardtop was a never-ending project. The restoration never seemed to gain momentum. You see, Ray had plenty of determination and skill, but unfortunately he lacked the tight focus and the long-term game plan needed to pull off a concours restoration.

During that time he amassed more cars, other project rides that he just couldn't turn down. They were pretty much all Chevelles, as that was the top prize in the bottom of the GM-flavored Cracker Jack box that Ray just couldn't stop digging in. These needy rides found a home in outdoor lots and several garages he rented and borrowed in suburban New Jersey.

When Ray turned 50 he took a hard look at his vehicular situation. It wasn't good. Plenty of good titles were locked in Ray's safe, all belonging to valuable muscle cars, but none was attached to a show-quality original car. Sure, he had a few runners, not to mention a particularly nice 454-motivated 1971 Chevelle droptop that he cruised the local streets in, but Ray wanted more. He was looking for a time capsule ride.

He decided to turn over a new leaf. The goal was to pull all his

resources together to find and procure a finished, topnotch, 1967 hardtop Chevelle, a show-caliber ride to own and drive. No more cramming cars into cubbyholes for future reclamation. He needed a sweet, original ride, and he needed it now.

Ray remembered a beautiful Chevelle he had seen at the local car shows. Not only was it clean, but rumor had it that the car was a true original—still running under its born-with drivetrain and wearing factory paint. In Jersey that's a tough combination to find, as Garden State roads can be pretty nightmarish and unforgiving, especially in the winter. Ray knew it would be tough to find another '67 this clean in his lifetime. He was tired of driving cars with holes in the trunk, botched floors, and patched-up exteriors. The car was for sale. He knew he had to score this one.

He made a serious offer on the car. With a little negotiating he finally had the original, yet concours-condition ride that he had been yearning for all those years. After the purchase all of Ray's project cars became a footnote in his life. The Chevelles, Camaros, and Novas he had amassed in earnest for decades now meant little to him. He was content to leave them behind and just enjoy driving this one, the car Ray waited his life for.



**This Chevelle
Is a GM Hoarder's
Top Pick**

The Best of

History

This Chevelle SS was bought new in 1967 by Michael Romer of New Milford, New Jersey. During his ownership he did what most car guys would do, the changes typical for the period. He tinkered with the carb and cam in the hot car, looking for that extra dose of power. However, a fender bender would soon sideline the car, and after he had it repaired it was parked for a good period of time.

In 1981, John Blaha of nearby Hackensack bought the SS. He just had to have the sweet and super clean A-Body. He too stuffed it away, and then months later finally registered it for the road. Once out on the streets, John realized the car would brake hard to the left. He took it to several shops to diagnose the problem. He had the brakes, suspension and frame checked, but turned up no solid answers. He then parked it again in a clean, dry garage, as he didn't feel the need to drive a car with that issue.

In 2010, John reassessed the car, which by this time had sat dormant for more than a decade. The car was gone over thoroughly, and he tried once again to find a cure for the brake issues. During that time he decided to freshen up the 396/350hp numbers-matching engine to help properly

awaken it from its slumber. It was at that point that the mystery of the brake pull was discovered.

Turns out a kinked brake line was the gremlin in this Chevelle. It's amazing that such a glaring problem had been overlooked for so long. Once fixed, the car was ready for some serious cruising, as it had seen little or no daylight since the early 1980s. And once it made its way outside and to the local car shows, that's when Ray discovered it and quickly procured it for his own.

Rejuvenation

After its 29 year sleep, this Chevelle was still in pretty original condition. The car retains its original Mountain Green factory paint job, which, except for a few corrosive flaws around the wheelwells, is in amazing condition. With just a light buffing, the paint popped, and the rest didn't need much to get show-ready. Ray made the wise choice to



the Bunch

■ The Chevelle's original 396/350hp engine was freshened by a previous owner but otherwise remains unmolested. Backing the motor is an M21 4-speed and 3.55 gears in a 12-bolt axle.

■ Among the few unoriginal parts on Ray's Chevelle are the front seats, which he bought to replace a newer set procured by a previous owner.

■ A big Sun tach was added by the first owner and has stayed on the Chevelle throughout its life.

■ The second needle on the speedometer is a rare speed indicator, which didn't deter most Chevelle owners from tearing up the local streets.

■ Ray's Chevelle retains all the original sheetmetal, including the spotless trunk floor. The original jacking instructions and limited-slip warning label are still affixed to the inside of the trunk lid.

■ This Chevelle shows evidence of wearing dog dish caps originally (the steel wheels are painted body color). Ray opted to add the mag wheel caps that were an option in this model year.

■ Ray Smith's original Chevelle SS396 is a rare find in New Jersey, where the hellish road conditions eat up cars like this on a regular basis. This car survived with just minor rust behind the rear wheels, a testament to a life spent mostly indoors and just 86,000 miles on the odometer.



AT A GLANCE

1967 CHEVELLE SS396

Owned by: Ray Smith, East Brunswick, NJ

Restored by: Unrestored original

Engine: 396ci/350hp V-8

Transmission: Muncie M21 4-speed manual

Rearend: GM 12-bolt with 3.55 gears and Positraction

Interior: Black vinyl bucket seat

Wheels: 14-inch steel with mag-style hubcaps

Tires: 205/70R14 Cooper Trendsetter

Special parts: Speed indicator, rear antenna, original paint and interior, Sun tach

keep the flaws and to keep its born-on green skin as original as possible. And since it still has its original paint, it still has all its original sheetmetal, including the trunk and floors.

The interior was in excellent shape as well. The car retains the original door panels, carpet, rear seats, factory gauges, and the rare speed warning indicator. As for the driver seat, John Blaha took out the original buckets and installed later-model units with headrests because he felt they were safer. Ray removed those seats and sourced the original-style metal-back buckets, which he then had recovered in repop vinyl.

The grille is in mint condition and has never been off the car. The rivets are still original and clean. The rear differential even has the original Positraction decal, now yellowed but still legible and clear. Anything that was removed from the car over the years was boxed up and saved, except for the original shifter, which was tossed early.

The basics of the car are pretty straightforward—a 396/350 car backed by a sturdy M21 four-speed. Out back, a 3.55 Posi gets the power to the wheels. Manual drum brakes and steering kept the price down, and the car retains all its original suspension parts.



“Garden State roads can be pretty nightmarish and unforgiving, especially in the winter”




Since it was an early production car (September 1966), the console does not have the chrome seatbelt clips that most of the '67 models had. Interestingly, the car was not ordered with the typical blinker tachometer; the first owner installed a period Sun Super Tach on the steer-

■ If you asked his friends which of all the cars he owns best represents Ray's personality and style, hands-down they would say the 1967 Chevelle. He fell in love with the car's aggressive looks and slick roofline at first sight and knew deep down that one day he would have one of his own.

ing column, which has never left the car.

Ray has decided not to make any changes to the car. He is going to run it like it is. Even the wheels are the original steel wheels, but are now capped by the cool mag wheel cover option available for 1967. Ray believes that the car originally came with poverty caps, since the wheels were painted body color from the factory.

Ray couldn't be happier with the performance and looks of this sweet '67, a car he can get in and drive without inhibition and still turn heads wherever he goes. As for the project cars he has stashed everywhere, there's no need to get to them. Ray's got his dream car now. 

We've all seen the various makeover shows where someone or something gets remodeled, repaired, or modified throughout the program until the last three minutes or so when they finally show the result. Well, we don't have any quick-cut video with dramatic music under it as we flip between the before and after views. If you've been following this story from the beginning, you've already seen all of the before stuff. No, this is the good part and the reward for not quitting. This is proof that an enormous pile of sometimes mismatched parts can be rescued from utter failure and turned into something to be admired.

After all this, you've either decided that you can't wait to get started on a basket case project or you're completely cured from any desire to buy one. But don't forget, as we learned back at the beginning, a basket case project doesn't (and in fact

shouldn't) be a do-it-all-yourself venture. No one person has all of the skills necessary to expertly restore one of these all by himself or herself. The key to successfully pulling off a basket case resto is to know what you can do and what you need to farm out to an established expert. Even Muscle Car Restorations, which has its own team of paint, body, upholstery, and mechanical experts, knows when to utilize the expertise of others, for the frame powdercoating or the stainless trim repair, for example.

Chris Argentieri's Chevelle likely started out as a driving older restoration that was starting to show its age. Someone began what was intended to be a complete expert resto, and even got a great deal of the metal and bodywork completed (if incorrectly). Unfortunately, for whatever reason, that prior owner was unable to finish it, and, as you've seen in each installment, what was left was quite a mess.

The first thing Muscle Car Restorations

did when it came into the picture was to inventory all the parts (never believe a seller who says, "I have everything you need to finish the car") and determine what could be salvaged. This led to a list of items that were needed and a list of parts that would be restored. The next essential step was to plan all the steps that would be taken and in what order. That was followed very closely by a plan to both locate and finance all the parts that were needed and the processes that had to be sent out.

The plan Chris had in mind was to return his SS to factory stock but with a bit more power, improved handling, and whatever could be done to help it live longer on the street, because Chris wants to drive it as often as he can. That plan started with powdercoating the frame and most of the chassis components, since powdercoating is much more resistant to chips, rust, and other damage and is also much easier to keep clean from road debris. PST chassis

"An enormous pile of mismatched parts can be rescued from utter failure"



bushings and parts keep the handling tight, but the ride remains very comfortable. Muscle Car Restorations' two-stage base/clearcoat paint is already much tougher than the factory single-stage colors, so no change needed there.

Under the hood, the 396 needed a new crank anyway, so a 4.00-inch stroker was used to up the cubes to 434. A little head porting, bigger valves, a custom roller cam, and custom pistons help to get the power up over 500 hp in a package that looks like a stock rebuild with a set of headers. It has lots of big-block torque, yet the mild idle keeps it very easy to drive.

It is rare to get the chance to follow a complete resto this closely for this long, but now you have the insight to bring your muscle car dream to fruition. Yes, it's the end of the road for our Basket Case Chevelle, but now this is the beginning of a lot of road time for Chris and his now-new 1970 Chevelle SS.



Basket Case Chevelle, Part 12: The Finale

Basket No More

By Mark Ehlen
Photos by Wes Allison



"No one person has all of the skills



■ Because the 396 that came with the car was its own basket case of worn-out and incorrect parts, we sourced a block with the correct casting number, bored and stroked it to 434 ci, and fitted it with parts that would make the engine powerful but still drivable on the street.

■ The factory oval-port heads were retained for the sake of originality but realized a substantial flow increase with some mild porting and 2.19/1.88-inch valves over their original 2.06/1.72 versions. A set of headers from Doug's Headers provided a big improvement over the stock cast-iron exhaust manifolds.

■ The original Q-Jet and iron manifold were also kept for originality, but they didn't stop this 10.5-1 big-block from grunting out 518 hp and 550 lb-ft of torque.



■ The Chevelle's interior was originally red and mostly there, though outside of the seat frames, almost none of it was reusable. So the decision was made to switch to black, which goes much better with the black vinyl top. Legendary and NPD were invaluable in helping to get it all right.

■ After the frame, rearend, and control arms were all powdercoated, Muscle Car Restorations relied heavily on the chassis experts at PST to provide the correct springs, linkage, and factory type bushings to tighten up the handling while maintaining a comfortable ride. Brakes are factory-style replacements also from PST.

■ National Parts Depot and Ground Up contributed exterior trim, emblems, and lighting components to help finalize the Chevelle's body buildup. Getting these details right makes a huge difference in the car's ultimate presentation.



AT A GLANCE

1970 CHEVELLE SS396

Owned by: Chris Argentieri, Los Angeles, CA

Restored by: Muscle Car Restorations, Chippewa Falls, WI

Engine: 396ci (now 434)/518hp V-8

Transmission: Muncie M21 4-speed manual

Rearend: 12-bolt with 3.42 gears and Auburn Posi

Interior: Black vinyl bench seat

Wheels: 14-inch SS

Tires: F70-14 Firestone Wide Oval



necessary to expertly restore one of these all by himself”

PROJECT SOURCES

AA-Midwest

702/649-7776
aamidwest.com
Engine block

American Autowire, Inc.

800/482-WIRE (9473)
americanautowire.com
Wiring for entire car, switches

Anaheim Gear

714/778-1103
anaheimgear.com
Muncie rebuild

Auto Vision Center

715/834-5277
autovisioncenterec.com
Windshield and back window install

California Car Cover

800/423-5525
calcarcover.com
Car cover

Classic Performance Products

888/522-8306
classicperform.com
Power steering, steering box, brake master cylinder

Coker Tire

800/251-6336
cokertire.com
Tires

Competition Cams

800/999-0853
compcams.com
Camshaft, rockers, lifters, push-rods, timing set

CP Pistons

949/567-9000
cp-carrillo.com
Pistons, rings

Custom Autosound

800/888-8637
customautosound.com
Stereo, speakers

Doug's Headers

dougsheaders.com
Headers

Eagle Specialty Products

662/796-7373
eaglerod.com
Crankshaft, connecting rods

Energy Suspension

949/361-3935

energysuspension.com

Engine and trans mounts

Extreme Metal Works

exmetalworks.com
330/550-3638
Trim restoration

Federal Mogul; Fel-Pro

662/224-8972
federal-mogul.com
Head gaskets

Flowmaster

707/544-4761
flowmastermufflers.com
Exhaust pipes, mufflers

Ground Up

866/358-2277
ss396.com
Exterior trim and emblems; headlights, taillights, marker lights; parking and backup lamps

Instrument Specialties

401/267-0055
instrument-specialties.com
Dash and gauge cluster resto

Jet Performance

800/535-1161
jetchip.com
Q-jet rebuild

Legendary Auto Interiors

800/363-8804
legendaryautointeriors.com
Seat covers, carpet, headliner, sun visors, package tray

Mahle Aftermarket Inc.

mahle-aftermarket.com
Clevite bearings

McLeod Racing

714/630-2764
mcleodracing.com
Clutch parts, bellhousing

Moser Engineering

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moserengineering.com
Rear end kit, carrier, axles, ring and pinion, Posi

MSD Ignition

915/857-5200
msdignition.com
Starter, alternator

Muscle Car Restorations

715/834-2223
musclecarrestorations.com
Project oversight and execution

National Parts Depot

nationalpartsdepot.com
Interior accessories, bumper fasteners, exterior mirrors, trim

Original Parts Group, Inc.

800/243-8355
opgi.com
Windshield, back and window glass, interior small parts, fuel tank and hardware

PerTronix

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pertronix.com
Distributor, coil

Powerhouse Products

800/872-7223
Engine assembly tools

PPG

ppgrefinish.com
Paint

Premiere Powder Coating

608/525-5005
premierpowdercoating.net
Frame and chassis powder-coating

PST

877/226-4101
p-s-t.com
Control arm bushings, steering linkage, brakes, springs, ball joints, tie rods

SoffSeal Inc.

800/426-0902
soffseal.com
Door window seals, weather stripping, body mounts

Thermo-Tec Automotive Products

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thermotec.com
Sound deadening, heat barrier

Trans-Dapt

562/921-7515
tdperformance.com
Engine sheetmetal

Wheel Vintiques

800/959-2100
wheelvintiques.com
Rally wheels and accessories



■ As is the case with virtually all basket cases, “ready for paint” is never true. Though there was new sheetmetal on the car, Muscle Car Restorations found a number of issues hiding under the primer that had to be fixed to make the body right again. In the end, the brilliant application of PPG Monza Red code 2089 speaks for itself.

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“The weekend wound up blowing away everyone’s expectations”



■ Rich Bruhn's remarkable 1967 Comet GT is all original right down to the BFG Silvertowns and cheater slicks mounted on real Halibrand magnesium wheels. Bruhn tells us the 427-powered Merc, with Thunderbolt suspension pieces installed by Dearborn Steel Tubing and engine tuning by Holman & Moody, was reportedly built for Leonard Wood of the Wood Brothers. But since Wood wasn't interested in racing in a straight line, he lent the car to a friend to drag race it. The car eventually went into a private collection, where it sat for some 26 years before Bruhn bought it in the mid 1990s.





Great Move

**The Car Craft
Summer Nationals,
Now in Milwaukee,
Is Bigger and Better
Than Ever**

By Drew Hardin

Holding a car event for the first time can be a dicey proposition. Will the venue work? Will the weather hold? Most important, will the people come and bring their cars?

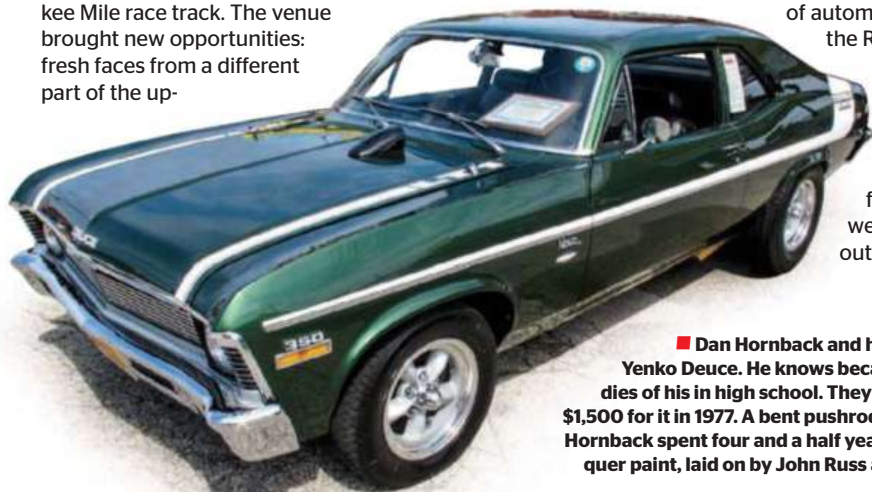
Well, two out of three ain't bad.

The *Car Craft* Summer Nationals isn't exactly a first-time deal. It has been drawing Midwestern car nuts for years. But the 2015 event moved to a new location, the Wisconsin State Fair Park near Milwaukee, home to the famous Milwaukee Mile race track. The venue brought new opportunities: fresh faces from a different part of the up-

per Midwest, more space for cars, and a longer, faster autocross course. The weekend wound up blowing away everyone's expectations.

More than 6,000 cars were preregistered when the Summer Nats began, a tally that continued to grow as the weekend progressed. Thousands of people turned out to enjoy the event, which included not only the wide expanses of cars and aforementioned autocross but also the burnout contests, a Miss *Car Craft* competition, games for kids, autograph sessions with a number of automotive celebrities, the chance to hang out with the Roadkill crew, vendor exhibits, and more. And that turnout was despite the fact that it poured rain on move-in day and the area was under a tornado warning Saturday afternoon.

But a little squirrely weather did little to dampen the enthusiasm of the thousands of folks who came out to enjoy a car-filled summer weekend. Nor did it keep away the owners of some outstanding muscle cars, as you'll see here.



■ Dan Hornback and his wife Carol are the fifth owners of this immaculate Yenko Deuce. He knows because the second, third, and fourth owners were buddies of his in high school. They sold the car among themselves until Hornback paid \$1,500 for it in 1977. A bent pushrod in the LT-1 sidelined the car for some 20 years, then Hornback spent four and a half years putting the car back together. That gorgeous lacquer paint, laid on by John Russ at Pro Body & Paint in Bristol, Illinois, is 20 years old.



“A little squirrely weather did little to dampen the enthusiasm”



■ Our MaliBeater patina project car, with its newly aged ZZ427 crate motor, made its public debut at the Summer Nats. Arvid Svendsen, with me riding shotgun, drove it up from Chicago, and the car performed flawlessly. During the weekend the car's owner, Brad VanHemert, took it for a spin around the fairgrounds. He was a very happy guy.



■ If we wondered what the MaliBeater would look like with fresh paint, all we needed to do was walk about 50 yards to Steve Howard's 1967 300 Deluxe post coupe. It shares the MaliBeater's black steelies/Cragars wheel combo, as “I wanted it to look like it was built in 1970,” says Steve. Underhood is a 0.30-over 454 mated to a Richmond four-speed.

CRUISIN' EASTWOOD

Our Summer Nats weekend actually started south of Milwaukee (in Alsip, Illinois, outside Chicago) when we stopped at the Eastwood retail store for lunch and a shop tour before cruising north. Manager Trevor Parsley led the tour and even demonstrated some of the com-

pany's latest offerings, showing us how customers can get hands-on with many of Eastwood's products—including paint guns, panel flangers, and hard-line flaring tools—in the store before taking them home.

Among the store's most popular features are the weekend classes and

seminars, which cover topics from air-brushing and color sanding to TIG and aluminum welding. The classes draw customers from a 50-mile radius. Many of the classes enable students to make something to take home, from wheel chocks and fire pits to shop tables.

The Eastwood store is at 12100 South Cicero Avenue, Alsip, IL 60803. Visit eastwood.com/chicago for more information about classes, seminars, and products available at the store.

■ And if they're good, they go home with treats.



■ MCR's publisher, Ed Zinke (left) and Arvid Svendsen with the MaliBeater in front of Eastwood's Chicago-land retail store.

■ More than just a stand for a glass-top table in the store's lobby, the engine is an exhibit of the variety of coatings Eastwood offers for underhood projects.



■ A number of muscle Buicks attended the Summer Nats. One of the nicest—and rarest—was Al Koper's 1970 GS455. The original owners, a father and son from the Chicago area, knew their way around the order sheet: big-torque motor, four-speed transmission, positraction axle, dual exhaust, and meaty G60-15 tires. A friend of Koper's, Clark Lumsden, performed a rotisserie restoration on the car back in 2000-2001, and it still looks fresh.



■ Matt Ruffing drove his real-deal 396/375hp Nova 80 miles from his hometown in Germantown, Wisconsin, to the Summer Nats. "I drive it every day," he says of the immaculate Chevy. "In fact, I probably clean it more than I drive it." Ruffing is the third owner. Family friend Tommy Keife performed the restoration, which took some six years. The car has 62,000 miles on it, the (correct) replacement engine about 3,000.

■ Split-window Corvettes are so valuable it's rare to see an unrestored one. But that's exactly what Rick Filtsch owns. His 1963 Corvette is an original, 85,000-mile car that earned its patina sitting in the Houston sun for 30 years while the first owner worked at NASA. Filtsch went through the car to make it mechanically sound, and he swapped the original whitewalls for Firestone repops from Coker. Otherwise it is just as it was sitting in the parking lot outside the Johnson Space Center for all those years.



■ Andy Kothe considers himself the caretaker of this 51,000-original-mile 1970 Road Runner, which spent years sitting in a barn after the original owner, Dan Geirn, stopped driving it. Geirn bought the 383/four-speed/Air Grabber car new when he returned from service in Vietnam but rarely drove it. What was Geirn's secret to keeping the vinyl top looking so fresh? Kothe says, "Shoe polish."



Super Star



By Tom Shaw

Break out the back issues and dig deep. This magazine has been published for more than 30 years, but you won't find a car like Nick Smith's extraordinary 1960 Starliner.

Now, 1960 Fords are not particularly rare. More than 911,000 were built, but this one has an engine that has sort of fallen through the cracks of history. It's the 360hp 352, probably Ford's least-well known high-performance engine. In the 1960 Ford dealer album it is called the Thunderbird 352 Super V-8, one notch up from the 300hp Thunderbird 352 Special V-8. In terms of horsepower, it was Ford's highest-rated engine that year, besting even the 350hp 430 available in the T-bird only.

So why is it virtually forgotten today and so seldom seen? Who knows? It may have to do with the car's styling, which was not widely loved. It may have to do with the midyear introduction, or the minimal promotion. Whatever the reason, the 352ci/360hp engine is one of the few corners left in the muscle car universe where there's still some fresh ground to be broken.

This was Ford's first effort to build a truly high-performance engine from the inside out. Far more than a power pack-type engine, the 352 High Performance included things that would

become standard issue on muscle car engines, like an open-element air filter, an aluminum intake manifold, a solid-lifter cam, and header-style exhaust manifolds. It was unprecedented, and opened the floodgates for a decade of increasingly powerful engines coming out of Detroit.

The difference in real-world performance between the 360hp 352 and the 300hp 352, the next highest engine in the option lineup, was huge. *Motor Life* magazine tested a 1960 Starliner with the 352/300hp and reported a quarter-mile e.t. of 20.7 seconds with a trap speed of 80 mph flat. A snoozer, right? Another Starliner was tested in the January 1960 issue, this one equipped with the new 352/360hp engine. The e.t. for this car dropped by five seconds to 15.32 at 92.87 mph. A second test of a Starliner with the 352/360hp engine in *Motor Life's* July 1960 issue listed an even lower e.t. of 14.81 at 94.71. The slow 352/300hp car also had an automatic transmission, which was no hot rod's gear-box. Even so, an engine that could shave e.t. by more than five seconds was almost supernatural.

Even better, the option was affordable (\$204.70) and was offered in all 1960 Ford models except wagons.

No reliable figures exist regarding production, but it couldn't



★ Super-Sweet Starliner Packs the Rare Top-Option Engine

“This was Ford’s first effort to build a truly high-performance engine from the inside out”

have been a big seller. Nick Smith shares some firsthand insight on the matter.

“My guess is that somewhere in the neighborhood of 5,000 1960 Hi-Pos, including all body styles, were built,” he says. “I want to be clear; I don’t know the real number. A lot of people, including myself, would love to know the true answer. Certainly, today there are not many of those real cars left. I’d guess maybe only a few hundred.”

Nick owned a brand-new 1960 Hi-Po Starliner from March 1960 until February 1961. He says, “I drove it back and forth from West Palm Beach to college in Virginia. Like all the other performance-oriented kids that owned a hot car, I paid attention to any likely competition on the road, whether another Ford or other make. I can tell you that in the Carolinas and Virginia, there were so many 1960 Hi-Pos that you couldn’t keep track of them. There were also plenty of hot Chevys and Pontiacs too. I started legally drag racing in 1960. At Roanoke dragstrip alone, there were eight to 10 Hi-Po Fords every weekend.”

Nick’s car is a genuine factory-built 352 Hi-Po model, restored by Donald Allen of Cleveland, Georgia.

“Donald is probably the best in the country for restoring the

early 1960s Fords,” says Nick.

Could be. This one certainly shines like a new penny. The workmanship is of the highest caliber throughout. A key part, the data tag, located in the doorjamb in 1960, was restored, not replaced with a reproduction. A reproduction would have slightly differently shaped numerals and letters and would raise the possibility that something was altered.

Ford produced little, if any, factory literature on the 352/360hp engine. Nick, a longtime Ford dealer, offers a plausible explanation.

“A lot of upper management was not interested in high performance,” he says. “The mentality, especially back in those days, was very frustrating. Back then it was all about satisfying NASCAR and not really about selling them to the public.”

Because so little factory information on the 352/360hp was produced, there are plenty of “false facts” floating around.

“Any study of these cars is pretty fascinating because there is so much speculation and erroneous opinion out there,” says Nick. “It’s fun because you don’t know what you’ll hear next. Just don’t take it as fact because it probably won’t be.”

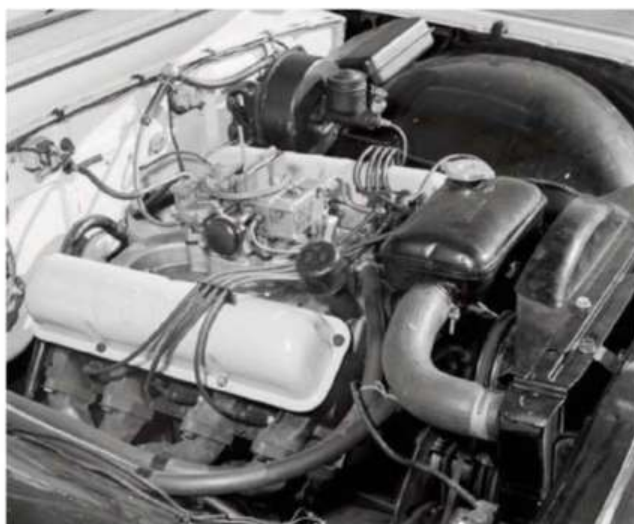
The 352/360hp Fords have some quirks. There was no exterior badging for a 352/360hp car. They share the same engine code



■ The styling of the 1960 Starliner may not be everyone's favorite, but you gotta admit that it looks great here, especially in Montecarlo Red. Ford departed from 1959's Thunderbird-inspired "boxtop" C-pillar for 1960, going with this sleek semi-fastback design. Most of the fastback surface came from the rear window, which was 30 percent larger than the windshield.



■ It doesn't look that radical, but this engine cut more than five seconds off the Starliner's quarter-mile time. It topped out at more than 150 mph on Ford's test track and outpowered arch-rival Chevrolet's 348 3x2 by 25 hp.



■ In the Petersen Publishing photo archives we found this outtake from Ray Brock's review of "Ford's Optional Super-Stock" in the Dec. 1959 *Hot Rod*. Note the differences between this engine and Nick's. Brock's tester, likely a prototype or development car, has power brakes (not available on a Hi-Po), no preheater tube from the exhaust manifold to the carb, a different coolant tank, no stickers on the valve covers, no lock tabs on the exhaust manifold bolts, a different fan shroud without a caution sticker, and different ground cable mount location. Also, the overdrive relay is on the right side of the firewall. Both have the big-pulley generator. Wonder what that big box is on the driver-side fender?

but there is mystery there too.

Nick says, "Even though Ford specs showed the 14-inch tires and wheels, we don't think any production cars were built that way outside of a few proto-

as the 300hp 352—both are Y—a fake-car-builder's dream, but good luck finding parts. Hi-Po 352s came only with the three-speed manual transmission, though you could also get your three-speed with overdrive.

All the 352/360hp cars got electric windshield wipers (no vacuum). To avoid passing too close to the redesigned exhaust manifolds, brake lines were routed across the top rear of the lower radiator support instead of across the crossmember beneath the engine.

Hi-Po cars got heavy-duty, 3-inch-wide front brakes, a 3-inch driveshaft, and heavy-duty suspension (heavy-duty front springs, five-leaf rear springs, heavy-duty shocks, and a 0.62-inch front stabilizer bar). They also got different wheels from the rest of the standard production Fords,

AT A GLANCE

1960 STARLINER

Owned by: Nick Smith, Stuart, FL

Restored by: Donald Allen

Engine: 1960 352ci/360hp High Performance V-8

Transmission: BorgWarner T85 3-speed manual with overdrive

Rearend: 3.50 gears

Interior: Stock fabric/vinyl bench seat

Wheels: 15x5 stamped steel

Tires: 710x15 Firestone Deluxe Champion bias-ply

Special parts: Midyear optional engine package



■ No buckets and console here. No padded dash, in-dash air conditioning, tach, or floor shift either. This is strictly passenger car content, though the Starliners, Sunliners, and Galaxies got the highest trim level interiors, including color-coordinated Morocco Grain Vinyl door panels and pleated-stripe tweed nylon and vinyl seats. Floor mats are genuine Ford accessories.

“It opened the floodgates for increasingly powerful engines coming out of Detroit”



■ Before 1966, Ford's V-8 engines were painted black. The different versions were identified by valve cover color.

■ *Hot Rod* noted that “14-inch wheels are standard but 15-inch are suggested with heavy-duty brakes.” But Nick Smith says every example he's seen was riding on 15-inch wheels, so it's possible only the very early or prototype cars were on the smaller wheels.


■ The 352/360, released after the 1960 model year was under way, got some attention from the motoring press, including Brock's *Hot Rod* write-up and this cover story from the January 1960 issue of *Motor Life*. The cover car's a spittin' image of our feature car other than the full wheel covers and wide whitewalls.

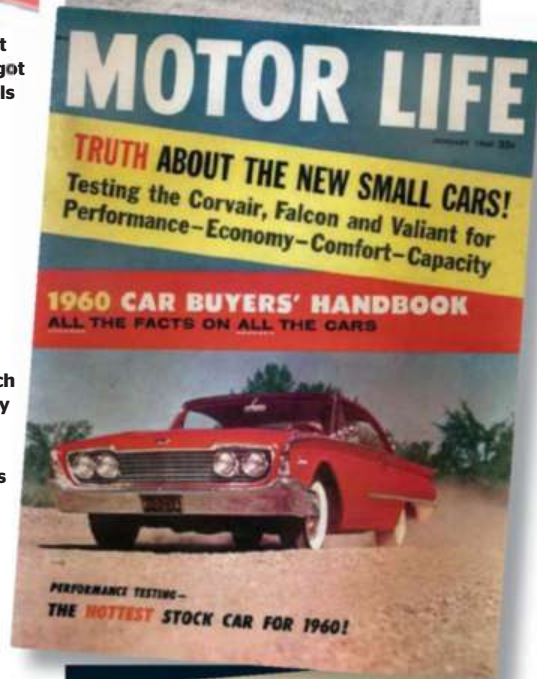
types used for testing. The original *Hot Rod* magazine report from December 1959 also showed pictures of the car with 14s and mentioned that size in the text. But every Hi-Po I've ever seen was built with either standard 6.70/15 or the optional 7.10/15 tires—no 14-inches—and they were always mounted on the flame-cut and welded Kelsey-Hayes 15-inch wheels. Those wheels were 5 inches wide on 1960 models, then became 5½ inches on 1961-1964 cars.”

According to specs that Chevrolet filed with the AMA in October 1959, the 348 with 3x2 induction was its top engine option, but horsepower topped out at 335 at 5,800 rpm. The 352 had that number covered and even exceeded the one-horsepower-per-cubic-inch mark. The horsepower race had just kicked into high gear.

If you've never heard of this engine, don't feel bad. Even in our fairly well equipped library that's pretty strong on Ford literature, there is almost zero factory info about it. Sometimes that is the fate of midyear releases because they arrive after the promotional materials have already been produced, usually in August. Manufacturers advise dealers of changes in content, but not necessarily the public. Yet through enthusiast magazines, the kids on the street knew more about it than dealers did.

All we could find were a few basic specs and a single footnote in tiny type at the bottom of a page highlighting other, lesser-powered 352s. Apparently Ford was depending on the enthusiast press to get the word out.

So we're doing our part, even if we are a tad late. 



DECODING THE CODES

VIN: ON53Y138552

O: 1960;

N: Norfolk, Virginia, assembly plant;

53: Two-door Starliner Club Victoria;

Y: 352ci V-8 four-barrel carb (includes 300- and 360hp engines)

Door Tag

Body: 63A (two-door hardtop);

Color: J (Montecarlo Red);

Trim: 35 (red cloth and vinyl);

Date: 13E (May 13, 1960);

Trans: 2 (three-speed manual with overdrive);

Axle: Unstamped (3.50:1)

HI-PO WHAT?

The High Performance 352 began production in the latter months of 1959, while the Edsel was still being built. Is it possible that a couple of 352/360hp Edsels were built?

A Deeper Look Inside One of the Muscle Car World's Least-Known Engines

★ Inside Ford's 1960 352/360hp V-8

It's hard to find any factory info on Ford's 360hp 352-inch V-8 because, as far as we know, Ford never released a brochure on it. And over the years it has been the subject of a lot of misinformation. But in preparing our story on Nick Smith's 1960 Starliner, the planets aligned. We had the good fortune to find a detailed, eight-page list of Automobile Manufacturers Association (AMA) specifications in a dusty corner of a Detroit library. When we arrived at Nick's Factory Lightweight facility in Stuart, Florida, he had a genuine 352/360hp engine torn down and available for pictures.

For the record, the issue date on the AMA form is December 1, 1959. That doesn't necessarily coincide with the start date of the engine's production, but it gives us a rough idea of the release date. Also for the record, these and other FE-family (352/390/406/427/428) engines were produced at the Dearborn Engine Plant, part of the huge and historic River Rouge Plant.

The 352 High Performance, as it is commonly known from the decal affixed to the gold-painted valve covers, was a breakthrough engine, featuring significant improvements in compo-

**"A big part of
the horsepower
boost came from
the cam"**

nents not customarily addressed in high-performance engines.

The big standard-issue breather found on Ford engines was junked in favor of a simple, round, open-element breather. This cut weight and provided a much larger, 360-degree point of entry for incoming air.

Both Chevrolet and Mopar favored Carter carburetors. Ford used a square-bore Holley 4160 with side-pivot bowls, vacuum secondaries, and automatic choke. The carburetor's cfm rating was not listed in the AMA specs, but our friends at Holley checked the original specs and found that the cfm rating was 540. The intake manifold was a low-rise, dual-plane, cast-aluminum unit rather than cast iron, shaving the engine's weight by about 40 pounds. One other easy-to-overlook upgrade to the fuel system was larger, 3/8-inch fuel line replacing the standard 1/8-inch line in all other passenger cars.

Cylinder heads had a specific casting identified by a D suffix. The heads had upgrades, but nothing radical. Port and valve sizes were unchanged, but combustion chamber volume was reduced, bumping up compression a full point, from 9.6:1 to 10.6:1. Exhaust valves were upgraded from cast to forged steel, valve springs were



■ The block for the 352/360hp V-8 was the standard two-bolt 352 block. Ditto the crank. The only difference was that internal tolerances were loosened up a bit for better oil flow. This 352 High Performance engine was built for racing and has rod and main studs.



■ Port dimensions were unchanged from standard production. Valvesprings had a higher tension, and a supplemental coil was added to the valvesprings to prevent valve float.



■ Valves were all inline, operating off of rocker shafts. Rockers were adjustable, as required by the solid-lifter cam. All FE engines had the quirky feature of the valve cover straddling the mating surface of the head and intake.



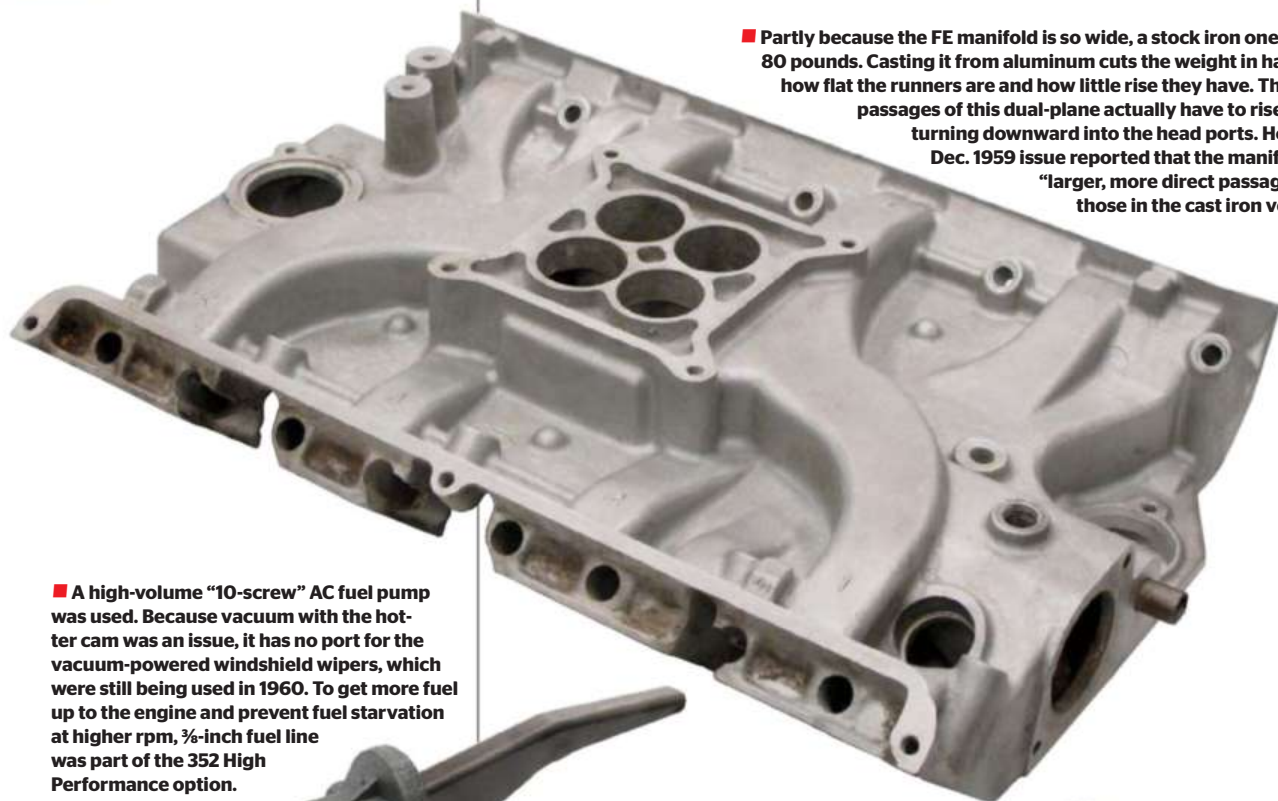
■ The big, elaborate breather normally used on 352s was ditched in favor of this high-flowing, open-element breather. The gold color of the breather and valve covers is specific to the 352/360hp.



■ Chamber volume was reduced to bump compression to 10.6:1, the highest of any Ford engine offered in 1960. A close-up of the combustion chamber shows that it was not machined like some reports erroneously stated. Valves are stockers at 2.02/1.55-inch, intake/exhaust. Exhaust valves, which run hotter than intakes, were upgraded to forged steel.

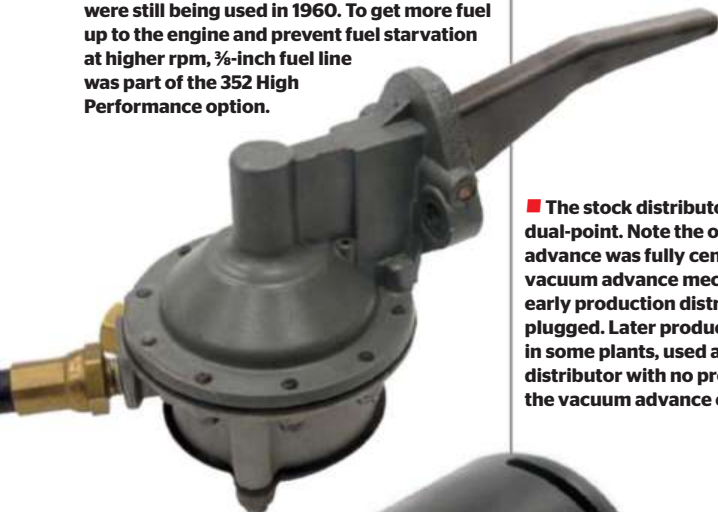


■ Ford was one of the first to use Holley carburetors in high-performance applications. The 4160 used on the 352 had vacuum secondaries and an automatic choke. Among insiders, it is nicknamed the "AA" for the last two letters in the part number, COAE-9510-AA. This one has been converted to a modern plastic top for the secondary diaphragm housing. The cfm rating was 540.



■ Partly because the FE manifold is so wide, a stock iron one weighs 80 pounds. Casting it from aluminum cuts the weight in half. Note how flat the runners are and how little rise they have. The lower passages of this dual-plane actually have to rise before turning downward into the head ports. Hot Rod's Dec. 1959 issue reported that the manifold had "larger, more direct passages than those in the cast iron version."

■ A high-volume "10-screw" AC fuel pump was used. Because vacuum with the hotter cam was an issue, it has no port for the vacuum-powered windshield wipers, which were still being used in 1960. To get more fuel up to the engine and prevent fuel starvation at higher rpm, 3/8-inch fuel line was part of the 352 High Performance option.



■ The stock distributor was a Ford dual-point. Note the oil port. Timing advance was fully centrifugal; the vacuum advance mechanism on early production distributors was plugged. Later production, at least in some plants, used a K-suffix distributor with no provision for the vacuum advance canister.



■ A new larger-diameter generator pulley was used to slow down generator rpm. This would also become standard practice in years to come. The crank pulley was larger and heavier and specific to this engine. Power steering and air conditioning were not available with this engine option.

■ Ford addressed a critical bottleneck in exhaust flow with these higher-flowing "shorty" cast iron headers. They have the two-bolt over-and-under pattern of the early FE engines.



upgraded with greater closed tension and a damper, and rockers were adjustable.

The block was standard two-bolt 352 production, as was the cast iron crank, though *Hot Rod's* Dec. 1959 issue reports that rod and main bearing tolerances were loosened up a bit for better oil flow. Pistons and crankshaft were standard production cast iron, but the rods were forged.

A big part of the horsepower boost came from the cam. In the interest of higher rpm, solid lifters were used, and duration and lift were bumped to 306 degrees and 0.479-inch, respectively. Valve spring tension was increased. A damper inside the outer coil was added. Ford changed valvesprings during the 1960 production due to reports of valve float.

The distributor was a Ford dual-point unit with no vacuum advance, and plug wires had steel cores with no radio suppression. There was no law mandating it in those days.

One of the best parts of the engine were the individual-tube cast iron exhaust manifolds, known today as shorty manifolds. They were a huge improvement over the terribly restrictive logs that other FE engines were stuck with. These manifolds were carried over to the next year's 390 High Performance and Police Interceptor engines.

These were aggressive advancements for their time, although not nearly as those found in engine packages that were soon to come. The 352 High Performance worked its magic with a fairly modest equipment list—no multiple carbs, aluminum heads, high-riser intake, steel crank, forged pistons, sodium-filled valves, or electronic ignition. But for those who knew it was on the option list, the 352 High Performance vaulted the 1960 Ford far beyond what was previously possible.

The 352 began life in 1958 as a tame V-8, despite its increased displacement. This version put it on a different trajectory and foreshadowed other mighty FE-family engines to come, among them the 406, 427, and 428 Cobra Jet. —Tom Shaw

“The 352 High Performance vaulted the 1960 Ford far beyond what was previously possible”

■ Later manifolds used on the 406 High Performance and 427 would have a Tri-Y design with longer runners.

1960 FORD 352 HIGH PERFORMANCE ENGINE SPECIFICATIONS

Type	90° overhead valve V-8, cast iron block/heads, 2-bolt mains
Displacement (ci)	352
Advertised horsepower	360 @ 6,000 rpm
Advertised torque	380 lb-ft @ 3,400 rpm
Bore and stroke (in)	4.00x3.50
Compression ratio	10.6:1
Carburetor	Single Holley 4160 4-V, vacuum secondaries, automatic choke, 540 cfm
Bore size (in)	15 primary/secondary
Fuel	Super premium
Intake manifold	Aluminum single 4-V non-spread bore
Intake valves (in)	2.02
Exhaust valves (in)	1.55, drop forged
Camshaft	Solid lifter
Camshaft duration/lift	306/306° duration, 0.479/0.479-inch lift
Valvetrain	Close-tolerance pushrod holes cast into head
Rocker arms	Adjustable fulcrum, pushrod-guided, screw-in studs
Pistons	Cast aluminum
Connecting rods	Forged steel, separately forged caps
Crankshaft	Cast iron, externally balanced
Ignition	Dual-point distributor, mechanical advance only, no vacuum advance
Advance	9° @ 1,200; 14.5° @ 4,000; 27° @ 5,000
Firing order	1-5-4-2-6-3-7-8
Spark plugs	Champion F83Y
Spark plug wires	Steel core
Exhaust	Header-type cast iron manifolds, dual exhaust w/ balancer tube, rear-mounted mufflers
Other features	Aluminum 4-blade fan, open element breather, large generator/alternator pulley

1960 ENGINE SPECIFICATIONS

GENERAL	FALCON SIX	MILEAGE MAKER SIX	THUNDERBIRD 352 V-8	THUNDERBIRD 352 V-8	THUNDERBIRD 352 SPECIAL V-8	THUNDERBIRD 352 SUPER V-8	POLICE INTERCEPTOR 352 SPECIAL V-8	THUNDERBIRD 428 SPECIAL V-8
Type	In line, 6-cyl.	In line, 6-cyl.	90° V, 8-cyl.	90° V, 8-cyl.	90° V, 8-cyl.	90° V, 8-cyl.	90° V, 8-cyl.	90° V, 8-cyl.
Bore x Stroke, in.	3.50 x 2.50	3.62 x 3.60	3.75 x 3.30	4.00 x 3.50	4.00 x 3.50	4.00 x 3.50	4.00 x 3.50	4.38 x 3.70
Piston displacement, cu. in.	144.3	223	292	352	352	352	352	430
Brake horsepower at rpm	90 @ 4200	145 @ 4000	185 @ 4200	235 @ 4400	300 @ 4600	360 @ 6000	300 @ 4600	350 @ 4600
Max. Torque—lb-ft @ rpm	138 @ 2000	206 @ 2000	292 @ 2200	350 @ 2400	381 @ 2800	380 @ 3400	381 @ 2800	490 @ 2800
Compression ratio	8.7 to 1	8.4 to 1	8.8 to 1	8.9 to 1	9.5 to 1	10.6 to 1	9.8 to 1	10.0 to 1

■ You'd think that a major engine option like the 352/360hp would get some promotional push, but other than a footnote at the bottom of the page with other 352 engines, this is the sum total of information on this milestone engine in the 1960 Ford dealer album.





MODERN-DAY L88

By Arvid Svendsen

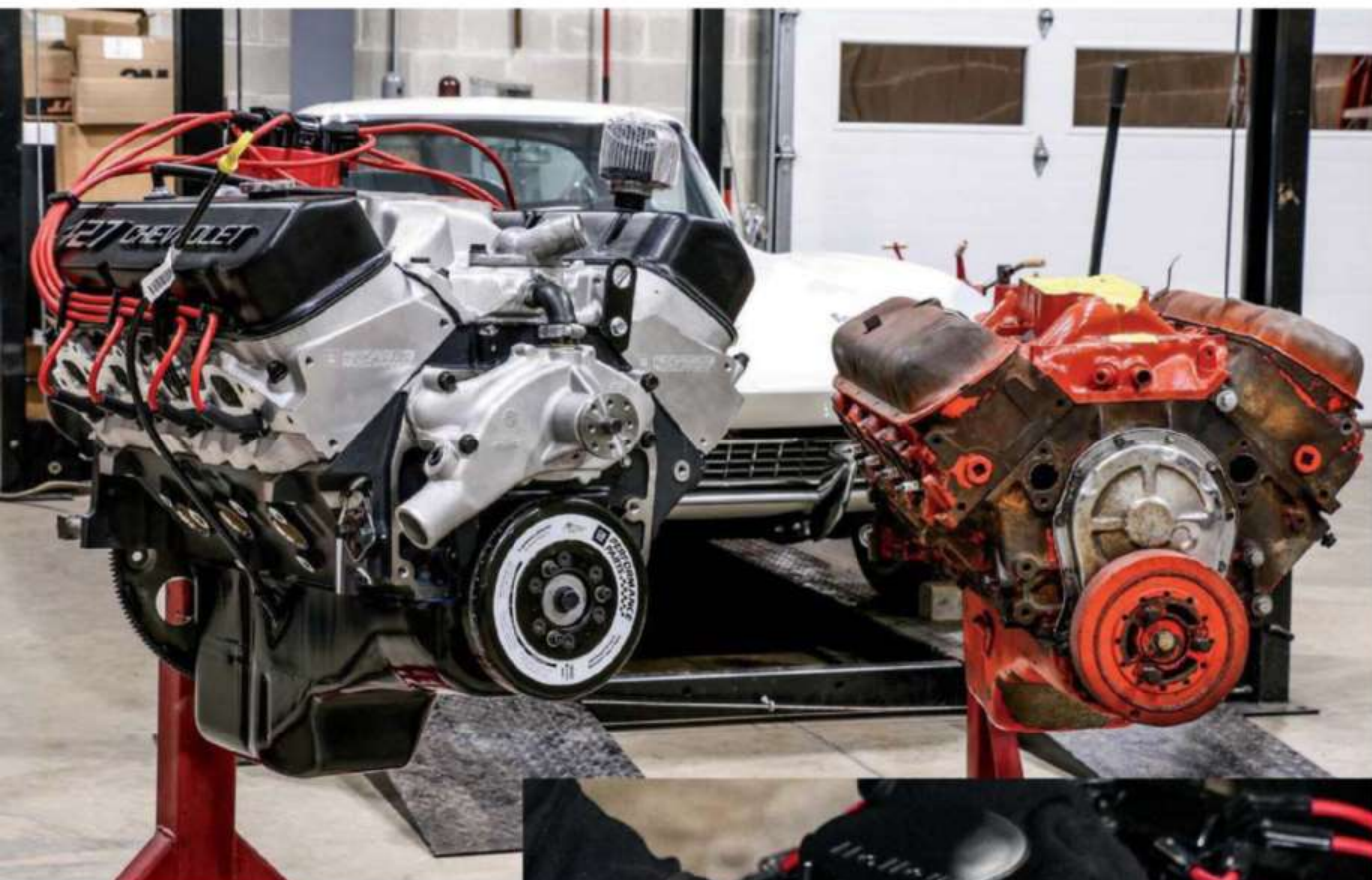
It has been a while since the MaliBeater appeared in *MCR*, so before we dive into this latest installment on the long-running project car, a bit of background. MaliBeater is the 1967 Chevelle Malibu owned by Brad VanHemert. The car was purchased with a dying motor from the original owner, Alan Schaffer, in 2013 for \$5,250. I talked VanHemert into letting *MCR* use the car for tech stories. It is a lifelong California and Phoenix car that came from the factory with a 283 engine, a column-shift three-speed manual transmission, manual steering, and manual drum brakes.

The Bolero Red A-Body is virtually rust-free and the perfect candidate for a fun

Project MaliBeater Gets Chevrolet Performance ZZ427



1 Project MaliBeater is being built at Midwest Muscle Cars in Lake Zurich, Illinois. Owner Matt Renz is an adept forklift driver. That big crate is packing 427 ci from Chevrolet Performance.



2 Chevrolet Performance rates the ZZ427 engine (left) at 480 hp. The motor is built with the best components in Chevrolet's parts inventory. On the right is a standard-fare, old-school 454 engine. Note high valve/rocker covers for the higher-ratio roller rockers.

3 Included in the Chevrolet Performance ZZ427 package is this nicely polished Holley 770-cfm four-barrel carburetor with vacuum secondaries and electric choke.

driver. The mostly original paint is nicely burned up, but we like it that way. There's a tiny bit of rust activity on the bottom of the passenger fender, and the trunk is weak in a couple spots, but otherwise it is an amazing unrestored original.

You don't need shiny paint and matching numbers to have fun with a muscle car. Frankly, you don't need a muscle car to have muscle car fun. Simply put, clone cars can be a lot of fun. Our attempt is to build a car that might have been in the hands of an ambitious muscle car guy in the late 1960s who stumbled upon a grungy and dirty L88 motor to create a fairly gallant sleeper.

At the start of the MaliBeater build, a 327-inch L79 from a 1966 Corvette was installed at Midwest Muscle Cars. The L79 was a running motor, but it was a bit weak. If there were to be any substantial road



“You don't need shiny paint and matching numbers to have fun with a muscle car”

trips, a rebuild would be in order. As *MCR* Editor Drew Hardin and I began to discuss the possibility of taking the MaliBeater to some muscle car events in 2015, roadworthiness became a concern.

We debated the merits of a rebuild versus a transplant. We both liked the idea of the L79, but when the conversation

branched out to include other engines, the idea of a big-block was hard to pass up.

It just so happened that Drew was headed to the SEMA Show shortly after one of those discussions. While he was there he struck up a conversation with Chevrolet Performance boss Dr. Jamie Meyers. A short explanation of our Project MaliBeater

resulted in some very generous support from Meyers and his team in the form of a brand-new Gen VI ZZ427 crate engine. Rated at 480 hp and touted as a modern-day L88, the ZZ427 carries many of the same features found in the 427ci/430hp L88 introduced in 1967, but with new, high-end Chevrolet components and parts.

When the L88 engine was introduced for 1967, it was intentionally underrated at

430 hp from the factory. I still remember staring at a picture of that motor in a *Hot Rod* magazine astounded by the claims that it made more than 500 hp. A single four-barrel motor that makes more power than a tri-power setup? Who'da thunk it? Interestingly, I believe I was buying into the propaganda Chevrolet was putting out about the L71 and the L88. The factory was trying to steer most customers away from

the wild L88 and towards the higher-rated but less powerful L71 427/435 engine sporting the three two-barrel carburetors. Chevrolet must have reasoned that the L88 was too much power for a street car.

As it turned out, word spread quickly that the L88 was far more potent than the L71. Other than the ZL1 (and later the LS6), there was no more coveted big-block motor coming from Chevrolet than the



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4 Details matter. The motor came with these lift tabs already mounted for ease of installation.



5 Another nice detail: Threaded holes ready for accessory drive mounting.

6 The aluminum cylinder heads are designed with high-flow oval ports and 110cc combustion chambers.



427/430 L88. History has shown that the L88 generated well over 500 hp with exhaust manifolds and at least another 30 horses with open headers.

The connection between the L88 and

the Gen IV ZZ427 is valid in many ways. Like the L88, the ZZ427 incorporates a four-bolt-main iron block and aluminum cylinder heads. The engine is internally balanced with a forged steel crank and forged

steel rods spinning forged aluminum pistons. The compression ratio is 10.1:1, allowing the motor to run on 92-octane pump gas. The hydraulic roller camshaft specs are 0.527-inch intake and 0.544-inch ex-

“The factory was trying to steer most customers away from the wild L88”



7 Typical modern screw clamps do the job. But how cool might it be to see some vintage hose clamps on this motor?



8 The damper included on the ZZ427 is built by ATI and is legal in NHRA, IHRA, and NASCAR. ATI is a leading manufacturer of a number of performance parts, and Chevrolet Performance wisely called on the company to provide a top-quality component for the internally balanced Gen VI engine.



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9 The 8mm red spark plug wires included in the ZZ427 package are beautifully routed. The details from Chevrolet Performance make for an impressive package.

10 The ZZ427 motor comes with an HEI distributor. Because we will be changing this motor to a more vintage look, we will remove this distributor in favor of a stock-looking unit.



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11 The Chevrolet Performance 1.7:1-ratio roller rockers are a work of art. The higher ratio effectively increases cam lift, while the roller rockers nicely complement the roller lifters in decreasing parasitic friction in the valvetrain.

haust lift, with 224 degrees intake and 234 degrees exhaust duration at 0.050. The aluminum cylinder heads (PN 19211799) sport 2.190-inch intake and 1.880-inch exhaust valves. The aluminum roller rockers have a 1.7:1 ratio and slick pushrod guide-plates. The HEI distributor comes with a melonized steel gear and wires. Chevrolet Performance includes a 770-cfm Holley carburetor with the purchase of the motor.

Prepare for some reliable hearsay: My buddy Mark Webster just installed a ZZ427/480-horse motor in a customer's car. They dyno'd the engine before installation and saw 530 hp at the flywheel. Happy dyno? Possible. I would conclude that Chevrolet is still pretty good at underrating its motors.

Happy as we were with the new engine, we soon realized that a shiny, gleaming powerplant wouldn't look right in the Mali-Beater's engine compartment. To make it look more at home—and more like a crusty old L88—we enlisted the help of Corvette and muscle car expert Mike Ardito, a genius at making stuff look vintage. More on that next month. 

SOURCES

Chevrolet Performance
chevrolet.com/performance

Midwest Muscle Cars
mwmcars.com



12 Drew Hardin writes, "Arvid lobbied hard for a teardrop hood on the MaliBeater, but I and many of our readers felt that kind of hood belonged on Fords, not Chevys. So we have other plans for topping the ZZ427. But Arvid couldn't resist submitting this photo of his beloved teardrop, with these words: 'Unless you grew up in New York or New Jersey like I did, you probably do not get the idea of a teardrop hood on a Chevy. It is not just a Ford hood. Just to be clear, on the East Coast, where the Pilgrims landed and the Yankees still play baseball, teardrop hoods were on everything.'"



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Red, White

By Bob McClurg

“Up with the Rebel Machine!”

That authoritative shout-out was created by American Motors' advertising agency, Wells, Rich, Greene, to draw attention to AMC's new youth-oriented high-performance intermediate. Like the phenomenally successful Hurst SC/Rambler released just eight months before, the Rebel Machine was a joint venture between Hurst Performance Research, led by V.P. David L.

Landrith, and American Motors V.P. of Marketing R.W. “Bill” McNeeley.

With a 340hp 390 V-8 thumping beneath its twin snorkel hood, the Machine qualified as a bona fide street machine. But the real question was could lightning strike twice?

In retrospect, the Rebel Machine would have probably been an even bigger success had it been released in 1966 or 1967, when other muscle cars of its kind—the SS396 Chevelle, 389ci Pontiac GTO, 350ci

Oldsmobile, 390 Fairlane GT and GTA, 390 Comet Cyclone, and Mopar 383 cars—all roared onto the market. In fact, factory records indicate that AMC was working on a 343-inch, four-speed Rebel Machine test mule as early as 1967. This car was later updated to 1968-1969 trim complete with a 390 and four-on-the-floor, and was track-tested at Great Lakes Dragway in Union Grove, Wisconsin, but was never sold. There is also a widely circulated June 1968 archival photo that shows a satin black



“Could lightning strike twice?”

& Fast

**Giving AMC's Performance
Intermediate a Second Look**



■ This early design sketch of the Rebel Machine is believed to have been done by Hurst's Gene Baker, who also designed the Hurst SC/Ramblers.

■ This turntable model shows the actual 1969 343ci Rambler Rebel used to build the first Rebel Machine prototype. You can tell that this is an early factory photo because it still exhibits the soon-to-be-deleted "Up with the Rebel Machine" cartoon sticker.



stealth version of the Rebel Machine in the studio, but that car never saw the light of day either.

Those were troubled times for AMC. On-going UAW labor disputes, quality control issues, and a vote of no confidence led to a major shakeup of AMC's top management.

AT A GLANCE

REBEL MACHINE SPECS

Engine: 390ci V-8, 340 hp @ 5,100 rpm, 430 lb-ft @ 3,600 rpm

Drivetrain: BorgWarner M22 manual 4-speed transmission with Hurst linkage, Borg & Beck 10½-inch-diameter clutch, Dana 22 live axle with 391 gears and Twin Grip

Brakes: Bendix front disc/rear drum

Wheels: 15x7 steel two-piece

Tires: E60-15 Goodyear fiberglass-belted bias-ply

Suspension: Unequal-length A-arms, Rebel station wagon heavy-duty coil springs and shocks, 0.94-inch stabilizer bar (front); 4-link control arm with coil springs, 0.95-inch stabilizer bar (rear)

Dimensions

Wheelbase: 114 in

Overall length: 199 in

Overall width: 77.2 in

Overall height: 54.4 in

Shipping weight: 3,650 lb

This changing of the guard meant that virtually every program at AMC underwent scrutiny in an attempt to achieve immediate profitability and shore up the bottom line. We have no doubt the Rebel Machine program was affected in some way or another.

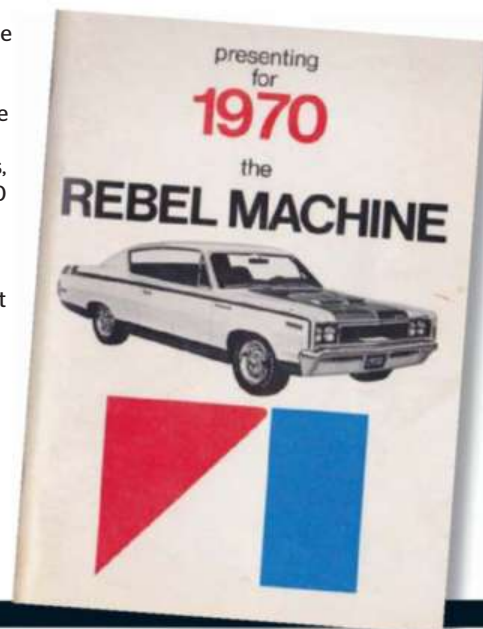
Fortunately, both Roy Chapin, the new executive vice president and general manager, and the newly appointed chief of styling, Richard Teague, recognized the value of image cars like the 1969 SS/AMX and the SC/Rambler. On October 16, 1969, Bill McNeeley, greatly heartened by initial sales of the SC/Rambler, sent out a press release announcing the new Rebel Machine.

When it came to performance numbers, AMC apologetically claimed 14.49 at 93.00 mph with the tongue-in-cheek description "not as fast on the getaway as a 427 Corvette or a Hemi, but it is faster on the getaway than a Volkswagen, a slow freight train, and your old man's Cadillac!"

■ Although AMC never officially raced the Rebel Machine or sponsored any racing teams, AMC did arm its salesmen with a wealth of knowledge for selling the Machine to the high-performance crowd. This really rare 50-page salesman's book was provided by AMC historian Larry Daum. It tells the salesman how to sell these cars using some pretty hardcore sales tactics!



■ The Rebel Machine cartoon sticker was penned for AMC by syndicated artist Johnny "B.C." Hart. Though it was left off production models, the sticker could be ordered through AMC. Twenty-five cents bought you two, postage paid.



AMC REBEL MACHINE REGISTRY

Ray, Michigan's Mickey Ziomkowski is a retired 30-year GM employee who just so happens to have a "thang" for the Rebel Machines. For 22 years he has been in charge of the AMC Rebel Machine Registry, whose goal, says Mickey, is "basically to document all the cars that are still out there."

AMC built 2,326 of the cars, according to Mickey. He says, "They made the first thousand in red, white, and blue. After that initial run, it cost \$75 extra to order one in red, white, and blue. These cars were also offered in 14 select OE colors."

Though the car was offered for the 1970 model year, the Registry has turned up one owner who has the 343ci Rebel Machine that was used as the mule car. "Its VIN says it's

a '69 but it's a genuine Rebel Machine, a one of one," says Mickey. "Right now we're trying to prove that it was also used in all the press kit photos taken out on the test track."

In addition to logging the cars, "we also document the options and colors that they came with," says Mickey. "With the exception of the 343 prototype, all 1970 AMC Rebel Machines came with the 340hp 390. You could get either an automatic or manual transmission. Standard equipment was a manual transmission with 3.54 gears, or you could order the optional 3.91. The automatic came with 3.15 gears."

Verifying these cars and their options as authentic can be "particularly difficult," says Mickey, "because AMC

did not keep documentation on these cars. You can't get a Marti Report like you can with Ford products. AMCs aren't matching number cars either. It's easy to prove that a car's got a 390 by the stamped block underneath, but as to whether that particular engine belongs to that car, about as close as you're going to get is the ID tag on the valve cover, and that could also have been removed. So there's no way to state with certainty that that particular engine belongs in that particular car."

It is possible to verify that a Rebel is a true Machine, says Mickey, thanks to an out-of-the-way VIN on the frametail. "Fortunately, we know of only one Machine that appeared to be faked."

The Registry's research has been able to clarify some issues surrounding the Machine's history. "When the Rebel Machines first came out, AMC said that they would not do any in Big Bad colors. We've have found examples of, and have been able to document, a few cars that came in Big Bad Blue, Big Bad Orange, and Big Bad Green."

As to their value, Mickey says "During the last two years at Mecum, pristine examples like the ones I have went for \$60,000. Today you would be lucky to find anything that's decent and restorable for less than \$10,000."

You can contact Mickey to find out more about the Rebel Machine Registry at rebelmachine70@yahoo.com.



■ This is one of Mickey's three Rebel Machines. He has a second red, white, and blue car, as well as a Bittersweet Orange automatic model.



■ For 1970, AMC rated the 390 V-8 at 325 hp, but the cold-air system on the Rebel Machine reportedly produced an additional 15 hp.



■ Hood-mounted tachometers were all the rage on late 1960s muscle cars. The Rebel Machine had them, too, mounted on the back of the hood scoop.



■ These 15x7 wheels, manufactured by Kelsey-Hayes, were officially known as "Machine Wheels," having made their official debut on the 1970 Rebel Machine. AMC also offered these wheels as an option on Javelin and AMX.

"AMC did not keep documentation on these cars"

On October 25, 1969, the Rebel Machine debuted before the automotive press during the NHRA World Finals at Dallas International Motor Speedway. A total of 10 cars were prepared for the event. Three were used by NHRA officials during the race, three were used in the parade with

Linda "Miss Hurst Golden Shifter" Vaughn and her court participating in the activities, and four were placed in the showrooms of AMC dealerships around the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

As can be expected, the buff books wrung out the Machine with dedicated

enthusiasm. *Car Craft* was the first to test one of the Rebel Machine prototypes, which at 325 hp was devoid of the cold air package. Nonetheless, CC's test rocket cranked out a favorable 14.50/98.37. *Road Test* magazine's test of the Rebel wasn't exactly kosher, with its H.L. Shahan

■ AMC introduced The Machine to the press at the 1969 NHRA World Finals in Dallas. Several of the “Hurst-ettes,” including Miss Golden Shifter herself, Linda Vaughn, were on hand for the festivities. “I loved every minute of that week in Dallas,” Linda says.

■ This is AMC's Go & Show brochure, which lists the Group 19 aftermarket high-performance parts and accessories that will fit the Rebel Machine. From dusting cloths to gear swaps and headers, the offerings were pretty comprehensive.


blueprinted 390. The 3,800-pound car recorded a best of 14.57/92.77. *Hot Rod* magazine's test was probably the most objective; tested stock, the car produced a best of 14.49/93.00.

Conversely, *Super Stock & Drag Illustrated* magazine's editors pulled out all the stops. The 390 engine was blueprinted and outfitted with a Crane cam, an Edelbrock high-rise manifold with an 850-cfm Holley, Doug Thorley headers, and Thrush mufflers. The clutch was replaced and a set of Goodyear drag slicks installed—all good day-two modifications that a reader might

do himself. The results spoke for themselves. Elapsed times dropped from 13.53 to 13.34. After dropping the tire pressure to just 16 pounds and coming off the line like a Stock Eliminator car would, at 5,500 rpm, the editors cranked out a creditable 12.81/107.35.

Although AMC never funded a factory-backed Machine for drag racing, the Machine's marketing materials were clear: "With a horsepower-to-weight ratio of 10.74:1, this qualifies the car for a very competitive position in the NHRA-sanctioned F/Stock class." To underscore this, AMC

also produced a four-page, pocket-size book titled *Go & Show* containing various bolt-on components from AMC's Group 19 parts catalog that were compatible with the new Machine.

After experiencing a creditable sales year with 2,326 units sold, AMC rolled into the new decade. The Rebel was gone, and the name *Machine* was transferred to the new Matador line. Powered by a tall deck AMC 401, the 1971 “Machine Go Package” car thankfully bore little resemblance to its illustrious predecessor, and the car rapidly faded away into obscurity. 


that week in Dallas," Linda says.

SHOW ITEMS DEALER INSTALLED

PART NUMBER	ITEM	DEALER INSTALLED PRICE
8882552	Sleeper - Ford Mustang	
8882557	Sleeper - Rear Deck	
8882573	Subsiders - Javelin	
8882576	Subsiders - AMX	
8882576	Burnout Slender - Rear	
8882576	Auto Park PD 30 30	
8882579	Tech	
8882580	Rear Lounge Carver	

KEEP IT CLEAN

8882581	Gutting Cloth	
8882584	Litter Dishwasher	
8882585	Polish & Cleaner	
8882585	Cleaner Cleaner	
8882585	Plastic & Leather Cleaner	
8882585	Tie & Road Oil Remover	
8882584	Shampoo Paste Wax	




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GO & SHOW

High Performance Parts & Accessories



GO ITEMS-DEALER INSTALLED

PART NUMBER	ITEM	DEALER INSTALLED PRICE
4488719	Camshaft Kit... 66-69 (290) (343) (390)	
4488718	Camshaft... 70 (304) (360) (390)	
4488728	Forged Crankshaft... 66-69 (290) (343)	
3276750	Heat Blocker Manifold Gaskets... 66-69 (290) (343) (390)	
3270257	Heat Blocker Manifold Gaskets... 70 (304) (360) (390)	
2191737	Cast Iron Intake Manifold... 66-69 (290) (343)	
2197035	Cast Iron Intake Manifold... 70 (304)	
4488725	Forged Connecting Rod... 66-69 (290) (343)	
4488731	Ederbrook High-Rise Aluminum Manifold and Single Holley Carburetor... 66-69 (290) (343) (390)	
4488740	Ederbrook High-Rise Aluminum Manifold and Single Holley Carburetor... 70 (304) (360) (390)	
4488567	Rear Axle Gear Set (9-45-5, 10-11)... 66-70 (290) (304) (343) (360) (390)	
3208551	Rear Axle Gear Set (9-40-4, 44-11)... 67 (290) (343)	
3208554	Rear Axle Gear Set (9-40-4, 44-11)... 66-70 (290) (304) (343) (360) (390)	
3208546	Rear Axle Gear Set (10-41-4, 10-11)... 66-70 (290) (304) (343) (360) (390)	
448760	Rear Axle Gear Set (11-43-3, 91-11)... 66-70 (290) (304) (343) (360) (390)	
448740	Rear Axle Gear Set (11-41-3, 73-11)... 66-70 (290) (304) (343) (360) (390)	
87900	Mallory Rev-Pol Ignition System (Late Yachmenor Drive)... 66-70 (290) (304) (343) (360) (390)	
87901	Mallory Rev-Pol Ignition System (Late Yachmenor Drive)... 66-70 (290) (304) (343) (360) (390)	
87553	Torque Link Kit... 67-69 (91 FV)	
8226	Cross Ram Dual Carburetor Aluminum Manifold... 67-69 (290) (343) (390)	
9471	Cross Ram Dual Carburetor Aluminum Manifold... 70 (304) (360) (390)	
582	Torque Link Kit... 66-70 70	
588	Heavy Duty Competition Rocker Arm Kit... 66-70 (290) (304) (343) (360) (390)	
587	Detroit Locker Positive Locking Differential... 66-70 (290) (304) (343) (360) (390)	
57	Header (Left)	
58	Header (Right)	
59	Old Pan (8% Gr.)	
58	Air Traction Spring - Javelin, AMX	
58	Locking Gas Cap	
58	Wheel Road (15 x 8")	

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NEW PRODUCTS



■ 409 Distributor

MSD now makes a ready-to-run distributor for the new aluminum Chevy 409 blocks. A rev limiter and ignition module are built into the distributor, which requires hooking up just three wires to be operational. That's why it's called ready-to-run. Information: MSD, 915/855-7123, msdperformance.com.



■ Carbon Fiber Watch

Are you a watch geek and a Mopar owner? Then check out the slick carbon fiber chronograph from Mopar. Housed within its 44mm case are one-minute, one-hour, and 24-hour indicator dials as well as large minute and second hands. The silicone wristband has a carbon fiber print to match the watch's design. Each watch comes in a gift box. Information: Mopar, mopar.com.



■ Hello Dollies

Pushing a project car around the garage with a floor jack isn't easy. That's why so many shops we visit these days have wheel dollies. Eastwood sells these handy items in two-piece sets, four-piece sets, and with a storage rack to get them off the floor when not in use. Each hydraulic dolly can lift up to 1,300 pounds and can accommodate tires up to 12 inches wide. Information: Eastwood, 800/343-9353, eastwood.com.



■ Interior Restoration Kits

Have an early muscle car? LeBaron Bonney offers interior restoration kits for Ford and Mercury cars up to 1962 and GM models up to 1957. The company also has experience duplicating original interior patterns as well as sourcing fabrics that replicate those originally used by auto manufacturers. If you are having trouble finding upholstery, door panels, headliners, or carpet for your car, then LeBaron Bonney Design Service can reproduce them as kits that are complete and ready to install by you or an upholstery shop. Information: LeBaron Bonney, 888/388-8726, lebaronbonney.com.



■ A-Body Weatherstrip

Metro Moulded Parts now offers door weatherstripping for 1967-'72 Mopar A-Body (Dodge Dart and Demon; early Barracuda, Valiant, and Duster) two-door hardtops, fastbacks, and convertibles. The strips are made from premium EPDM rubber on Metro's tooling and come with galvanized steel cores and anchor pins. Information: Metro Moulded Parts, 800/878-2237, metrommp.com.

■ New 450-cfm Carbs

Quick Fuel Technology has developed three new four-barrel carburetors, rated at 450 cfm, to improve throttle response for smaller displacement V-8s that may not need 600 or more cfm. These carbs feature normal 4150 modular carb dimensions, such as air-horn diameter and baseplate bolt pattern, so they bolt to 4150-flanged intake manifolds and accept traditional four-barrel air cleaners. They're built around a die-cast aluminum main body with 1.090-inch venturis and 1 $\frac{1}{16}$ -inch throttle plates. The HR-series carb has mechanical secondaries, while the Slayer and Black Diamond carbs have vacuum secondaries. Information: Quick Fuel Technology, 270/793-0900, quickfueltechnology.com.



■ Rust Removal & Prevention

OER now offers a complete line of products to combat rust. These professional-grade chemicals are specially formulated to return corroded surfaces to bare metal, convert existing rust to a paintable polymer coating, and seal out moisture and oxygen to stop rust from forming. Metal Prep, Rust Dissolver, Rust Inhibitor, Metal Etch, and Corrosion Barrier (in gloss and satin black finishes) are among the new cancer fighters. Information: OER, oerparts.com.



■ In the Capsule

CarCapsule offers an innovative way to protect your muscle car while it's in storage. The ShowCase is made from 10-mil PVC windows and an 18-mil PVC floor. It is supported by columns of air. CarCapsule's Evaporative Storage System technology circulates the air inside with filtered outside air three to five times an hour, keeping the temperatures consistent inside and out and preventing moisture from condensing on the car. A front panel zips open so you can drive the car in and out, while the side panels zip open, too, so you can walk into the ShowCase and even open the car doors. Information: CarCapsule, 219/945-9493, carcapsule.com.

Badges of Honor

You know what's odd about the 1960 Starliner I photographed for this issue ("Super Star," page 40)? It's got the hottest engine Ford Motor Company had cooked up—hotter than the dual-quad E-code (270 hp) or F-code supercharged 312s (300 hp). Hotter than the Police Interceptors (300 hp in 1960). And at least as far as factory horsepower ratings are concerned, hotter than the 390 GT (320 hp), Boss 351 (330 hp), and 428 Cobra Jet (also 330 hp). But there was no badge or emblem bragging about it. It might as well have had the thrifty Mileage Maker Six.

When I was discussing this with owner Nick Smith, lifelong car guy and longtime Ford dealer, he pointed out that engine callouts didn't become an industry practice until 1962. But once engine badging began, the cool feature was off and running.

Among the most beautifully decorated muscle cars ever were the 1963 and 1964 Super Sport Impalas, with their engine-turned side trim and trunk panels and the perfect chromed SS in a circle on the rear quarter. But if you stepped up for the so-fine 409, you got a pair of front fender badges—the numerals "409" above a chevron, all in classic chrome—declaring your car's superior rank among so many lesser cars. Just the badge, though understated compared to the engine's firepower, was enough to ward off the wise and provoke the not-so-wise.

Crosstown rival Ford went a little further with its larger, more elaborate Thunderbird engine badge that came with the upper-tier engine options. It made the right statement and was embraced by enthusiasts then and now.

Mopars didn't really get into the spirit of the badging game



until the appearance of the street Hemi in 1966, which came with a highly revered emblem that read "426 Hemi" in thick letters set above a solid bar. It was easy to read at a stoplight when you were looking out of the corner of your eye and trying not to give the Hemi driver the satisfaction of knowing you were looking.

A few guys always played the ol' switcheroo. They replaced the 427 badges that came on their very quick Biscayne with,

say, 327 emblems to disguise the mighty engine onboard and lure some unsuspecting slob into a street fight. On the other side of the coin were the kids putting 427 emblems on their meek 327 grocery getters to imitate the swagger of a real powerhouse muscle car. They were usually good for a couple of other superficial mods too, like glasspacks or maybe a set of rear spring shackles or air shocks.


It was harder to fake the badging when the industry

shifted away from die-cast emblems and went to 3M's vinyl. 'Cudas had some of the best, including the 1970 "hockey stick" stripes with callouts of their powerhouse engines, and the 1971 'Cuda billboards (which will always be among my favorites) spelling out those four letters that mean so much: H-E-M-I. While we're on the subject, let me nominate the big 340 graphic on the 1972 Duster 340 hood as the best engine callout ever. It was typically Mopar for the era: loud, proud, and outrageous. It even made it onto the Cars' *Heartbreak City* album cover.

As the muscle car market peaked, engine badging moved to the hood, with 351, 390, or 428 Cobra Jet showing up on the side of the Mustang hood-scoop. Mopar added "Six Pack" in big red letters to the side of the A12 Super Bees. A 'Cuda script was added to the side of their shakers.

Bragging about big, powerful engines through badging largely disappeared during the smoggy 1970s. When badging reappeared in the 1980s, it was with a metric spin. On the dominant Mustangs, it was now 5.0 instead of 302, but as long as the engines made plenty of tire-frying power, nobody seemed to mind. Detroit had been borrowing style from the continent for years anyway. A few were ahead of their time; Ford introduced the 1966 428 engine in a package called the 7 Litre (note that Euro spelling), and liter references showed up on Pontiac Trans Am Shakers during the 1970s.

Badging has made a big comeback today, with 5.0 badges on V-8 Mustangs and Hemi badges on Challengers and even Ram trucks.

I learned to read the writing on the fenders as a mere lad, and it's still one of my favorite things about muscle cars today. 

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